THE THOMIST

A SPECULATIVE QUARTERLY REVIEW
OF THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

EDITORS: THE DOMINICAN FATHERS OF THE PROVINCE OF ST. JOSEPH

Publishers: The Thomist Press, Washington 17, D. C.

VOL. IX | OCTOBER, 1946 | No. 4

SACRAMENTAL INCORPORATION INTO THE MYSTICAL BODY

WITNESSED by the recent Encyclical Letter of Pope Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*,[1] and by the numerous treatises of theological and devotional writers, the widespread and intensive interest among Catholics in the truth of the Mystical Body of Christ evidences a doctrinal survival against naturalism and a spiritual revival in the face of indifferentism. Throughout the ages of the Church the faithful have stood in awe of this sublime doctrine of the transcendent union of the members of Christ with their Head. Ever since St. Paul employed the metaphor " the Body of Christ " [2] to express the ineffable mystery of divine grace, which it is not given to man to speak, ever since that unique age when God spoke to

[1] Pius XII, Encyc. " Mystici Corporis," *AAS*, XXXV (1943), pp. 193-248.
[2] E. g., *I Corinthians*, vi, 15; xii, 27; *Ephesians*, i, 22.

and through men, Catholics have conceived of themselves as members of a divine organism.

For St. Paul this daring conception uniting the grossness of sense perception with the unspeakable reality of divine life became the characteristic mode of describing the great fundamental truth of the Christian life. To him was given the privilege of uttering this *word of wisdom* which has made for all the followers of Christ an almost tactile experience of the divine union among the members of Christ.

From St. Paul the Fathers and Doctors of the Church received this sublime teaching and doubled the talents of its richness by their contemplation, preaching, and writing. St. Cyprian, St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyril of Alexandria, and especially St. Augustine were the great expounders of this profound and yet universally appealing doctrine of Catholic truth. St. Thomas, enamoured of this truth so well attested by Scripture and so beautifully delineated in Tradition, looked upon it as a treasure hidden in a field and worthy of all the powers of his theological exposition. So thoroughly has St. Thomas treated this matter that many modern writers find in the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ the master-idea of the *Summa Theologica*.[3]

If the Mystical Body can be conceived of as the master-idea to an understanding of the most profound work of St. Thomas, certainly the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist may be considered as the master-key to the doctrine of the Mystical Body. The Mystical Body flowed from the side of Christ hanging on the Cross, for by the power of His Passion His Mystical Body was constituted, moulded, founded, and blessed. To apply the power of His Passion, Christ instituted the Seven Sacraments. For men they are the means of becoming a member of Christ, of being joined to the Head. Their common effect is the con-

[3] Cf. Anger, *The Doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ* (New York: 1931), (translated from the French by J. J. Burke), pp. xvi ff.

struction of the Mystical Body. To the two principal Sacraments as their proper effect belongs the forming of the union of the members with Christ. Baptism and the Holy Eucharist are the Sacraments of incorporation into the Mystical Body of Christ.

The precise purpose of this study is to clarify the relationship of the Sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Eucharist with the Mystical Body and to show that the unity of the Mystical Body is the direct, proper effect of the Sacrament of the true Body and Blood of Christ.

First, the doctrine of the Mystical Body summarized as "incorporation through grace in the Incarnate Word" [4] will be treated. Men are members of that Body of which Christ is the Head. All supernatural life descends to men through Christ after the manner in which natural life and movement flow from the head of the human body to its members. How this notion is borne out in the Mystical Body of Christ will be the matter of the preliminary section of this study.

I. The Mystical Body of Jesus Christ

"I am the way, the truth, and the life," [5] is Christ's solemn proclamation of His mysterious union with His Church which has staggered the intellects of men through the centuries of the Christian era. Forewarned by divine prophecies, men were not unprepared to receive a Messias who would be "the way"; "the truth" too as a concept applied to the Son of God was not "a hard Doctrine" for men who had sought wisdom at its fonts. But "the life"—that He Who "dwelt among us" should be an inner source of being and activity—is an idea and a reality astonishing even to those who "receive with meekness the ingrafted word." [6]

[4] E. Mersch, *Morality and the Mystical Body* (New York: 1939), (translated from the French by D. F. Ryan), p. vii.

[5] *John*, xiv, 6.

[6] I *James*, i, 21.

Doctrine of faith, dogma so intimately associated with the universal belief of Christians,[7] "the mystery of God in us"[8] is beyond the full comprehension of any human mind. Yet at the same time it is "a study which delights and nourishes Christian piety"[9] and is "calculated by its sublime dignity to draw all spiritual-minded men."[10] The presence of Christ in the visible society He has redeemed is expressed by St. Paul as the unique supernatural entity of Christ and His Mystical Body, the Church. In fact, according to Pope Pius XII, "if we would define and describe the true Church of Jesus Christ, which is the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church, we shall find no expression more noble, more sublime, or more divine than the phrase which calls it 'the Mystical Body of Christ.'"[11]

For St. Paul the doctrine of the Mystical Body was far more than a rhetorical device or even merely one among many doctrines he was to preach. It was the synthesis of the doctrinal and moral teaching that had been committed to him.[12] All of the Pauline Epistles, according to St. Thomas, may be grouped about this fundamental idea—the Grace of Christ as it is in

[7] Cf. Anger, *op. cit.*, pp. 351 ff.

"Without doubt, it (the doctrine of the Mystical Body) would have been defined by the Church if the Council of the Vatican had had the freedom to continue its work. A passage in the first chapter of the Schema, or Draft, of the dogmatic constitution of the Church, offered for the consideration of the Fathers of the Council, reads as follows: 'The only Son of God, Who enlighteneth every man coming into this world, and Who at no time has failed to aid the unfortunate children of Adam, did, in that fullness of time fixed by eternal decree, make Himself like unto us, and visibly showed Himself under the form of our body which He assumed in order that the sons of earth, worldly and carnal, might clothe themselves with the new man created by God in justice and true holiness and form one Mystical Body of which He Himself would be the Head.'"

[8] *Colossians*, i, 27.

[9] *Mystici Corporis*, p. 196; (All quotations are taken from the National Catholic Welfare Council translation, Washington: 1943).

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 193.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 199.

[12] Cf. E. Sauras, "El Constitutive del Cuerpo Mistico de Jesuchristo," *Cientia Tomista,* LXCI (1944), p. 253, and references cited.

the Head Himself, in the principal members of the Mystical Body, and in the Mystical Body itself.[13]

As for St. Paul, so for the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, the doctrine of the Mystical Body had a great appeal. For St. Cyprian, St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. John Chrysostom, particularly for St. Augustine,[14] and finally for St. Thomas [15] it was "a central idea," "a unifying viewpoint," and "a common voice" in the building of a theological structure. For some theological writers [16] "the fact that, in the eyes of St. Thomas, the doctrine of the Mystical Body sums up and unifies the theology of St. Paul, evidences more than a presumption in favor of our assertion that the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ dominates and unifies everything in the work of the Angelic Doctor." [17] However far "more than a presumption"

[13] Cf. St. Thomas, *In Omnes S. Pauli Apostoli Epistolas* (3rd ed.) (Turin: 1902), Prologue.

The following outline is based upon St. Thomas' Prologue:

- The Grace of Christ
  - In the Head Himself, namely Christ—Hebrews
  - In the principal members
    - Epistles to Prelates
      - I Timothy
      - II Timothy
      - Titus
      - Philemon
  - In the Mystical Body itself—
    - Epistles to the Gentiles on the Grace of Christ
      - Of itself—Romans
      - In the Sacraments
        - I Cor.
        - II Cor.
        - Galatians
      - According to the effect of Unity which it places in the Church
        - Ephesians
        - Philipians
        - Colossians
        - I Thess.
        - II Thess.

[14] Cf. E. Mersch, *Le Corps Mystique du Christ* (Paris: 1936), passim.

[15] Cf. T. Kappeli, *Zur Lehre des hl. Thomas vom Corpus Christi Mysticum* (Paderborn: 1931), pp. 2, 43.

[16] E.g. Anger, *loc. cit.*

[17] *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

may fall short of incontestable certitude, it is beyond question that St. Thomas, as a true disciple of St. Paul, was intensely interested in explaining the working of grace in what the sacred author has called "the body of Christ." [18]

Since God assists each sacred writer to express "aptly and with infallible truth" what He wants expressed and that only,[19] St. Paul's phrase "the body of Christ" [20] is most certainly a fitting metaphor. As a metaphor it must be understood and interpreted. For theologians to find more than an accommodative interpretation in an allegorical paralleling of the diverse parts of the human anatomical structure and the various functions and states of the Church would be to submit sacred truth to ridicule. Rather they should accept St. Paul's dictum as a parable and "piously and sedulously" [21] use their reason to discover the sublime aptness of the phrase.

By careful consideration of the created perfections that lie at the basis of this proportionate application of human concepts to divine truths, theologians may find a persuasive confirmation of the faith and a weapon for attacking error.[22] "Hence," solemnly affirms the Holy Father, "we do not censure those who in various ways and with divine reasoning strain every effort to understand and to clarify the mystery of this our marvelous union with Christ." [23] Such efforts naturally lead to a careful examination of the nature of moral incorporation among individuals as well as to the fundamental notion involved in the vital unity of a living organism.

A living body may be defined as an organic whole, made up of heterogeneous parts that are called members, all subordinated to the principal part, the head, both head and members being informed by a single vital principle, the soul, that moves

[18] Cf. *supra*, note 1.

[19] Leo XIII, Encyc. *Providentissimus Deus*, Nov. 18, 1893, Denzinger, *Enchiridion Biblicum*, n. 110.

[20] Cf. *supra*, note 1.

[21] Cf. *Council of the Vatican*, sess. 3, chapter 4, Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, n. 1796.

[22] Cf. *II Cont. Gent.*, 2, 3.

[23] *Mystici Corporis*, p. 231.

them to the common end of the whole, which is the preservation and ultimate perfection of the organism.[24] In the Mystical Body of Christ there are members, the faithful, all subordinated to the Head, Christ, both being informed by the soul, the Holy Ghost, which moves them to the common end, the perfection and completion of the Body of Christ. From an analysis of the Mystical Body it is evident that the elements that go to make up the Mystical Body are the constituents of a living body.

Although the Body of Christ is a living body, it is not a natural body and the differences between it and a natural body are varied. In a natural body the heterogeneous parts, the members, are not complete in themselves; they do not exist as numerically distinct; they do not exist antecedent to the being of the whole. The principle of unity so unites the parts that each is wanting in its own individual subsistence.[25] In the Mystical Body, a " supernatural " living body, the members are living beings, complete in themselves, numerically distinct, already having their own existence antecedent to their incorporation in Christ.

Although the members of the Mystical Body are subsistent beings, they have a new corporate unity in a vital social principle, the soul of the Mystical Body. Because it is a Divine Person, Who is His own subsistence, Who is wholly self-sufficient, and Who contracts no substantial union with the divine organism which is animated by His life, the soul of the Mystical Body cannot be joined by a substantial union with the Body.[26] In the natural order the soul is joined with the body by a substantial union, for in itself each is an incomplete substance and ordered to constitute a complete substantial essence. The Mystical Body of Christ, therefore, is a living Body, but it is a Body that transcends nature and is of the supernatural order, and hence it is termed by theologians the " Mystical Body of Christ."[27]

[24] Cf. E. Mura, *Le Corps Mystique du Christ* (Paris: 1936-1937), I, 115.

[25] Cf. *Mystici Corporis*, p. 221.

[26] Cf. Mura, *op. cit.*, I, 108.

[27] Cf. *Mystici Corporis*, *loc. cit.*

The term " Mystical " Body of Christ is used to signify that it is neither the physical body of Christ nor any other body in the physical or moral order. It is not the physical body but *another* body—" a social unit, a spiritual corporation of regenerate souls." [28] Neither is it merely a moral body maintained by the will of the members only with a common effort for a common end. The Mystical Body is not merely an organization bound to Christ by certain external bonds; it is an organism bound to the Head by the internal bonds of faith, hope, and charity. It is so united to Christ that His life is its life.

Further, " Mystical " is not opposed to " real," for there exist other realities besides those apprehended by human senses or comprehended by the human intellect. The Mystical Body is a supernatural reality. No mere abstraction, it is " a veritable reality, the subject of attribution, properties, and rights." [29] " Mystical," therefore, expresses the transcendent unity of the Head and members which is effected by the internal bond of charity flowing into the souls of the members through the efficiency of the Holy Ghost, who abides in the members as the efficient principle of the spiritual life, performing for the Body as efficient cause a function analogous to that of the formal vital principle in the human body, the spiritual soul. Because of this indwelling of the Holy Ghost as the cause of the same spiritual life coursing through each of the members, the Mystical Body is a kind of organism—a supernatural living Body. The created foundation for this intimate union with Divinity is sanctifying grace, the radical and formal inner principle of life in the supernatural order. All the living parts of this Body thus share in common two spiritual principles of supernatural life, the Holy Ghost and sanctifying grace.[30] Sharing in the Life of the Head—" of His fullness we have all

[28] F. Sheen, *The Mystical Body of Christ* (New York: 1935), p. 34.

[29] F. Prat, *The Theology of St. Paul* (London: 1939, translated from the French by J. L. Stoddard), II, 360.

[30] Cf. D. A. O'Connell, *The Union between Head and Members in the Mystical Body* (Washington: 1941), p. 5 ff. and the references cited.

received "[31]—the members form with Christ one complete whole. The whole Christ is head and body. However, in no way do they add to the measure of the supreme fullness and perfection of the supernatural gifts of Christ, for the personal grace in the soul of Christ is really and essentially the same as His grace as Head of the Mystical Body.[32]

The Mystical Body of Christ, therefore, is neither a physical body whose members lack their own personality, nor is it a moral body whose union is based on a common end and common effort to attain that end. It is a body with its members numerically distinct, and with its own unity and life, unequaled by any other known body. It is a Mystical Body, hidden and supernatural.[33]

A summary statement of the entire traditional teaching of theologians may be found in the apposite words of Pope Pius XII:

> There are several reasons why it (the name "Mystical Body") should be used; for by it we may distinguish the Body of the Church, which is a society whose Head and Ruler is Christ, from His physical Body; . . . and . . . this name enables us to distinguish it from any other body, whether in the physical or the moral order. In a natural body the principle of unity unites the parts in such a manner that each lacks its own individual subsistence; on the contrary, in the Mystical Body the mutual union, though intrinsic, links the members by a bond which leaves to each the complete enjoyment of his own personality. . . . If we compare a mystical body with a moral body, it is to be noted that the difference between is not slight; rather it is very considerable and very important. In the moral body the principle of union is nothing else than the common end, and the common cooperation of all under the authority of society for the attainment of that end; whereas in the Mystical Body of which we are speaking, this collaboration is supplemented by another internal principle, which exists effectively in the whole and in each of its parts, and whose excellence is such that of itself it is vastly superior to whatever bonds of union may be found in a physical or moral body.[34]

[31] *John*, i, 16.

[32] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 8, a. 5 corp.; ad 3um.

[33] Cf. Sauras, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

[34] *Mystici Corporis, loc. cit.*, p. 222.

The metaphorical equivalency of the organic unity of the human body and the supernatural union between Christ and His members leaves much to be desired towards a full explanation of the integrating constituents of the Mystical Body. Since, to approximate scientific knowledge of anything, it is necessary that its causes be known, the supernatural entity of the Mystical Body should be examined according to the four causes.[35]

According to St. Thomas,[36] the parts of a thing may be taken as its material cause. In the case of the Mystical Body, the Head, Christ as man, and the members, men united to Christ by grace, constitute this multiple underlying principle. Here it must be noted that Christ can be enumerated among the parts of the Mystical Body according to His human nature, but not according to His Divine Nature. " He can be termed a member according to His human nature," says St. Thomas, " in so far as He is the Head of the Church by reason of His Divinity." [37] In common with the other members Christ shares human nature, yet He receives no influx from any member. In Him as principle is found virtually everything which exists in those things of which He is the source. Considered in this manner, Christ cannot be said to be a member of His Mystical Body. Only inasmuch as He shares the same nature with the members can Christ be said to be a member of His Mystical Body. With Christ, thus taken, then are enumerated all those who are the receptors of His grace to form a unified organism of grace.

The formal cause, actuating the parts of the Mystical Body in the unity of the " Whole Christ," [38] may be considered as either internal or external. The exemplary, external formal cause of the Mystical Body is Christ Himself. Conjoining in His Person the divine and human natures in the most marvel-

[35] Cf. Mura, *op. cit.*, I, 118 ff.; *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 27, a. 3.

[36] Cf. *Summa Theol*, I, q. 7, a. 3, ad 3um; q. 45, a. 2; III, q. 90, a. 1.

[37] *III Sent.*, d. 13, q. 2, a. 1, ad 6um.

[38] Cf. St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.* XVII, 51; XC, II, 1: Migne, *P.L.*, XXXVI, 154, and XXXCII, 1159.

ous and intimate of unions,[39] Christ is the model of all such unions of grace, since that which is most perfect is the exemplar of whatever is less perfect.[40]

The internal formal cause of the living organism of the Mystical Body may be considered as it is found both in its principle and in its term. In its principle the formal cause of the Mystical Body is the Holy Ghost. At least the Holy Ghost is an analogous equivalent to a substantial formal cause, which, strictly speaking, is not found in the Mystical Body, for this union is not in the order of predicamental substances.

> To this Spirit of Christ, too, as to an invisible principle, is to be ascribed the fact that all the parts of the Body are joined with one another and with their exalted Head; for He is entire in the Head, entire in the Body and entire in each of the members.[41]

> The Church, then, is one living body, not only because a single soul dwells therein and makes a temple of it, but also because a single soul, namely, the theological virtues, which are divine life immanent in men, quickens its members inwardly.[42]

Terminatively considered, the formal cause of the Mystical Body is subject to further distinction. The essential element of this formal cause in the supernatural life of this union is sanctifying grace. Distinct from sanctifying grace and yet related as an element of the same substance, charity, as well as the other theological virtues, flows from sanctifying grace as an essential property. From a coordination of St. Thomas' doctrine of essential, as distinct from accidental, properties [43] with his expressed statement that " the light of grace which is

[39] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 2, a. 9.

[40] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 56, a. 1, ad 3um.

[41] *Mystici Corporis*, p. 219 ff.

[42] M. J. Congar, " The Idea of the Church in St. Thomas Aquinas," *The Thomist*, I (1939), 335.

[43] Si vero accipiatur accidens secundum quod ponitur unum quinque universalium, sic aliquid est medium inter substantiam et accidens. Quia ad substantiam pertinet quidquid est essentiale rei: non autem quidquid est extra essentiam, potest sic dici accidens sed solum id quod non causatur ex principiis essentialibus speciei. Proprium enim non est de essentia rei, sed ex principiis essentialibus speciei causatur; unde medium est inter essentiam et accidens. (*Summa Theol.*, I, q. 77, a. 1, ad 5um).

a participation of the Divine Nature is something besides the infused virtues which are derived from and ordained to this light," [44] it is evident that within the substance of the Mystical Body these two principles are present. Moreover,

> although many excellences are common to grace and charity because of their connection, they do not belong in them in the same way, since they are proper to grace as to their primary root, and to charity as its fruit. And again there is another excellence of grace which does not belong to charity, namely, to be the first formal principle of the supernatural order. It is also false that to divide between the sons of the kingdom and the sons of perdition belongs formally in an equal measure to both: for grace makes a son of God formally, charity, however, operatively. The former is the principle of being in the divine nature as participated, the latter is the principle of operating according to the divine nature as participated. And, likewise, in different ways each is the form of the virtues and joins (man) to the ultimate end, since charity is as the proximate principle of operating, the other is as the first principle.[45]

In the line of efficiency there is a twofold division into the principal cause and the instrumental cause. The principal cause of the Mystical Body is the Blessed Trinity, for " all caused things are the common work of the whole Godhead," [46] and by appropriation the Holy Ghost, to Whom is attributed the sanctification of men.[47] It is " the operation of the Holy Ghost, Who unites together and communicates the goods of one member to another." [48]

> This divine principle of life and power given by Christ, in so far as it constitutes the very source of every gift and created grace, . . . is nothing else than the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, and who is called in a special way the " Spirit of Christ." [49]

[44] *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 110, a. 3.

[45] Cajetan, *Commentarium in Summam Theologicam* (Rome: 1903), in I-II, q. 110, a. 3.

[46] *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 45, a. 6, Sed Contra.

[47] Cf. *ibid.*, ad 2um.

[48] *Ibid.*, III, q. 68, a. 9, ad 2um.

[49] *Mystici Corporis*, p. 218 ff.

The instrumental cause is the Sacred Humanity of Christ, the conjoined living instrument of the Divinity for the conferring of grace. Allied to this "Great Sacrament" as separated instruments which, in various ways, bring to men the "life of the Spirit" are the Sacraments of the Church instituted by Christ.

Lastly, the final cause of the Mystical Body is "the continuous sanctifying of the members of the Body for the glory of God and the Lamb that was slain." [50]

Having enumerated the causes of the Mystical Body, it is now necessary to proceed to a consideration of the unity existing in Christ's Mystical Body.

The Mystical Body of Christ represents an objective union in which the Head and members are organically united to one another by means of grace.[51] Sublime, mysterious, and divine,[52] marvelous for its intimacy, this union with Christ begets a new life in His members. Christ, the principle of this new life, lives and works in His members by becoming their life, the true supernatural life of those who belong to Him through Christian faith. The members in turn live in Christ and constantly absorb His supernatural strength, being united by a mysterious bond of the most intimate, ontological, and vital fellowship.[53] Christ Himself has emphasized this unity of His Mystical Body by comparing it to His inexpressible oneness with the Father,[54] and He has indicated the vital dependence of His members by the parable of the vine and the branch.[55]

"To this Mystical Body," writes St. Thomas in his commentary upon the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, "belongs a spiritual unity, through which by faith and the affection of charity we are united together to God. And because the spirit

[50] *Ibid.*, p. 226.

[51] *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 62, a. 1.

[52] *Mystici Corporis, loc. cit.*

[53] Cf. F. Jurgensmeier, *The Mystical Body of Christ* (Milwaukee: 1944, translated from the German by H. G. Curtis), p. 30.

[54] Cf. *John*, xvii, 21 ff.

[55] Cf. *John*, xv, 1 ff.

of unity from Christ is derived in us, . . . through His spirit, which He gives to us, He unites us to one another and to God." [56] According to St. Thomas, therefore, a twofold unity is found in the Mystical Body. St. Thomas first names this double unity and then proceeds to give the reasons for the unity.[57] First there is the union of the members with Christ. This union is the unity of " incorporation, by which we are transformed into Christ." The other unity is a unity of the members among themselves in and through Christ. This unity of the members is a unity of " life and sense " which is received from Christ the Head. By this unity of " life and sense " St. Thomas means the unity among the members established and maintained by grace and the virtues.[58] In giving the reasons for this unity with Christ and this unity among the members St. Thomas states: " We are one with Christ. . . by a union of faith, hope, and charity, and we many are one body through the subministration of the works of charity." [59]

Up to this point the existence of the twofold unity in the Mystical Body of Christ and the reasons for it enumerated by St. Thomas have been given in briefest form. Further treatment will be accorded it in a later section when the transformation of the members into Christ and the unity of the members of the Mystical Body in and through charity are treated as the reality (*res*) of the true Body of Christ received.

II. The Relationship of the Sacraments to the Mystical Body

According to the divine economy of salvation, to establish and secure the spiritual union of the Head and the members in His Mystical Body, Christ has instituted seven channels of grace, the Sacraments of the Church. Properly speaking, a Sacrament is defined as the " sign of a holy thing so far as it makes men

[56] St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, *Romans*, xii, 5.
[57] Cf. *ibid.*, *I Cor.*, x, 14 ff.
[58] Cf. *ibid.*, vol. II, *Ephesians*, i, 23; *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 69, a. 4.
[59] St. Thomas, *I Cor.*, *loc. cit.*

holy."[60] It is ordained to signify our sanctification, whose cause is Christ's Passion; whose form is grace and the virtues; whose ultimate end is eternal life.[61] From its very nature it belongs to a Sacrament to effect what it signifies. The seven Sacraments, therefore, bring men into contact with Christ's sanctifying power.

> Because . . . the death of Christ is a universal cause of human salvation, and because a universal cause must be applied to each effect, it was necessary to give men some remedies whereby the benefits of Christ's death might be united to them. These are the Sacraments of the Church.[62]

That they are the causes of grace St. Thomas proves with these words:

> We must needs say that in some way the Sacraments must be the causes of grace. For it is evident that through the Sacraments of the New Law man is incorporated with Christ. . . . And man is made a member of Christ through grace alone.[63]

Lastly the Sacraments accomplish the ultimate end of sanctification, which is eternal glory, because they apply to men the power of Christ's Passion, which is the sufficient cause of glory and eternal life.[64]

In the mind of St. Thomas, therefore, the doctrine of the Mystical Body is inextricably linked with the Sacraments. These latter incorporate man in Christ by conferring on him sanctifying grace. They act as separated instrumental efficient causes of the Mystical Body of Christ. They are the physical instruments divinely chosen to bring to men sanctifying grace, accompanied by the virtues and gifts which are the bonds of union between Christ and His members.

> These wonderful instruments of grace are . . . means which the Divine Goodness employs to establish and strengthen evermore,

[60] *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 60, a. 2.
[61] Cf. *ibid.*, a. 3.
[62] *IV Cont. Gent.*, 56.
[63] *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 62, a. 1.
[64] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 79, a. 2, ad 1um.

between Jesus and our souls, the organic bonds and that spiritual union which puts us under the beneficent action of our Mystic Head.[65]

Besides this note of conferring sanctifying grace and the virtues and gifts common to all the Sacraments, there is a special effect bestowed by each Sacrament. "The sacraments are ordained to certain special effects which are necessary in the Christian life." [66] This effect is "a certain Divine assistance in obtaining the end of the Sacrament." [67] It is called sacramental grace. Sacramental grace, being something in addition to the grace of the virtues and gifts, adds *some mode* or some intrinsic perfection modally distinct from habitual grace itself.[68] "Therefore, where there is a special effect of grace, there we find a special sacrament ordained for the purpose." [69] Fitting confirmation of this teaching is found in the words of Pope Pius XII:

> Now we see how the human body is given its own means to provide for its own life, health and growth and for the same of all its members. Similarly the Saviour of mankind out of His infinite goodness has provided in a marvelous way for His Mystical Body, endowing it with the sacraments; so that by so many consecutive, graduated graces, as it were, its members should be supported from the cradle to life's last breath, and that the social needs of the Church might also be generously provided for.[70]

Men, therefore, are united to Christ their Head, says St. Thomas, by faith and the Sacraments of faith:[71] "by faith first, because the rebirth is of soul, a personality, and is rebirth through a spiritual force in the being by which we are to be

[65] Garrigou-Lagrange, "Le Christ, Chef Mystique de L'Eglise," *La Vie Spirituelle*, XLI (1934), 118.

[66] *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 62, a. 2.

[67] *Ibid.*

[68] Cf. E. Hugon, *De Sacramentis in Communi et in Speciali ac de Novissimus* (6th ed., Paris: 1931), III, 91.

[69] *Ibid.*, q. 72, a. 1.

[70] *Mystici Corporis*, p. 201.

[71] Cf. *Q. D. de Ver.*, q. 27, a. 4; q. 29, a. 7, ad 8um.

bound in a spiritual touch." [72] The Sacraments, in various ways, bring to men this life-giving power of Christ the Head. For this purpose the various Sacraments were instituted. Each Sacrament was instituted to play its special role in the edification or preservation and development of the Mystical Body. Consequently, the Sacraments are classified as consecrative and curative.[73]

Through the consecrative Sacraments the recipient is permanently initiated into the organism of the Mystical Body. Through the waters of Baptism he is born to this new life and admitted to membership in Christ.[74] Confirmation perfects the member by giving him an increase of strength to protect and defend the Mystical Body.[75] The Sacrament of Holy Orders creates a unique union with Christ and endows the priest with the power " to offer in sacrifice the Eucharistic Victim, to feed the flock of the faithful with the Bread of Angels and the food of doctrine, to guide them in the way of God's commandments and counsels, to strengthen them with all the other supernatural helps." [76] " Matrimony represents the mystery of the union of Christ and the Church," [77] and the fruit of this union is the " external and properly regulated increase of Christian society and the correct religious education of the offspring." [78]

" The curative sacraments of Penance and Extreme Unction do not establish a new supernatural relationship with Christ, but they restore the member to spiritual health or reestablish his union with the Head." [79]

Finally among the Sacraments, there is one which contains in itself and gives purpose and significance to all the others—the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, the Sacrament of the true Body and Blood of Christ wherein is contained substanti-

[72] Congar, *op. cit.*, p. 353, and the references cited.

[73] Cf. Jurgensmeier, *op. cit.*, p. 99, and the references cited.

[74] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 68, a. 1.

[75] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 72, a. 1, a. 2.

[76] *Mystici Corporis*, p. 202.

[77] *Summa Theol.*, Supp. q. 36, a. 3, ad 2um; cf. III, q. 65, a. 3.

[78] *Mystici Corporis, loc. cit.*

[79] Jurgensmeier, *op. cit.*, p. 99 ff.

ally, says St. Thomas, the common spiritual good of the whole Church.[80] For St. Thomas, all things derive from this most august of Sacraments. "The Eucharist is, as it were, the consummation of the spiritual life, and the end of all Sacraments." [81] "In the Holy Eucharist the faithful are nourished and grow strong at the same table, and in a divine, ineffable way are brought into union with one another and with the divine Head of the whole Body." [82] This unity of the Mystical Body is the reality (*res*) of the Sacrament.[83]

At this point brief mention should be made of the secondary effect of three of the Sacraments, namely, sacramental character. Since Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders,[84] each received but once,[85] impress upon the souls of the recipients "a kind of seal so that they may receive or bestow on others things pertaining to Divine Worship," [86] the question naturally arises concerning their nature and their role in the edification and construction of the Mystical Body.

A character may be defined as a spiritual power impressed upon the soul which gives men a share in a greater or less degree in the priesthood of Christ.[87] Sharing in the priesthood of Christ by the specifically distinct entities of the various sacramental characters, the members of the Mystical Body fulfill their distinctive roles in the one spiritual organization.

While the principal concern in this treatment of the Mystical Body is the life-giving union with Christ accomplished by the infusion of sanctifying grace—the Mystical Body precisely as a kind of organism, not as an organization—at least brief consideration should be given to how the sacramental characters perform their function in relationship to the Mystical Body as it is an organization.

[80] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 66, a. 3, ad 1um.

[81] *Ibid.*, q. 73, a. 3. Cf. q. 63, a. 6.

[82] *Mystici Corporis, loc. cit.*

[83] Cf. *Summa Theol., loc. cit.*

[84] Cf. Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, n. 695; *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 63, a. 6.

[85] Cf. Denzinger, *op. cit.*, n. 852; *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 62 ff.

[86] *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 63, a. 4.

[87] Cf. *ibid.*, a. 2; a. 3; a. 5.

Properly speaking, the purpose of the sacramental character is to depute the faithful to receive, or to bestow on others, things pertaining to the worship of God.[88] The sacerdotal character of Holy Orders deputes the leaders of the Church to confer the Sacraments on others; the Baptismal character confers on men the power to receive the other Sacraments; the character of Confirmation brings men to the fullness of the perfect age in Christ.[89] The characters, therefore, are spiritual insignia of those called through the Sacraments to be the sons of God; yet their possession is no guarantee of membership in the Mystical Body of Christ. The baptized who have departed from the faith or who have been condemned to Hell have the eternal seal of Christ upon their souls, but they no longer possess membership in His Mystical Body.[90] Baptism of desire or of blood has united many souls to Christ who were never marked by Baptism of water.

Consequently, while causing an official union to exist between Christ and the soul, the sacramental characters fail to establish a personal union. Grace alone effects a personal union in the Mystical Body. The sacramental characters, therefore, although they are spiritual bonds between Christ and souls, are not to be numbered among the elements which establish life-giving union with the Head of the Mystical Body and constitute one as His member. The characters erect the Church as an organization; grace vivifies it with divine life and makes it a kind of organism. The characters order the members; grace gives them life.

All the Sacraments were instituted for the building-up of the Mystical Body of Christ, for through them the vital influence of the Head flows into the members. Two of the Sacraments—Baptism and the Holy Eucharist—however, deal with the Mystical Body in a preeminent way, and therefore may properly be called the Sacraments of incorporation into

[88] Cf. *ibid.*, a. 3.
[89] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 63; q. 72, a. 1.
[90] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 63, a. 5 corp., ad 2um, ad 3um.

Christ. To these two Sacraments it belongs to establish the Mystical Body, to cause its growth, to bring it to its perfection and completion. Baptism, the Sacrament of Faith, is ordained to generate spiritual life in men; the Holy Eucharist, the Sacrament of Charity, is given to maintain and increase this life even to its perfection and fullness. With these two Sacraments the Mystical Body is constructed, maintained, and completed. "The Church . . . is said to be built up with the Sacraments which flowed from the side of Christ while hanging on the Cross."[91] "From the side of Christ hanging on the Cross there flowed water and blood, the former of which belongs to Baptism, the latter to the Eucharist, which are the principal sacraments."[92] The role of these two Sacraments in the Mystical Body, therefore, will comprise the matter of the sections that are to follow. The first consideration will be of that Sacrament which regenerates men into a new life in Christ—the Sacrament of Baptism.

III. The Sacrament of Baptism and the Mystical Body

"The door of the Sacraments," as St. Thomas calls it,[93] Baptism is by its very nature primary among the Sacraments of the Church with regard to its reception. Baptism is "a regeneration unto spiritual life";[94] it is the Sacrament of birth into the Mystical Body of Christ. Through Baptism man is generated unto life in the Mystical Body, whereby be begins to be and to live.

At corporal birth every man is dead in the eyes of God. From Adam he has inherited corporal life but spiritual death. Original sin has been transmitted to his soul through corporal generation,[95] and each child is born not in the integrity of human nature but in the state of corrupt nature with a complete absence of supernatural life. Born a child of sin, each man exists in a state of opposition to God and his ultimate end

[91] *Ibid.*, q. 64, a. 2, ad 3um.
[92] *Ibid.*, q. 62, a. 5.
[93] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 63, a. 6.
[94] *Ibid.*, q. 66, a. 3.
[95] Cf. *ibid.*, I-II, q. 83, a. 1.

of eternal beatitude. He is conformed to Adam the sinner. "He has contracted sin from the sin of Adam and is under the ban of death." [96]

As a remedy against this absence of supernatural life the Sacrament of Baptism has been instituted.[97] This Sacrament is ordained for the removal of original sin.[98] To effect birth into the spiritual life, to conform men to Christ, to incorporate them into Christ—for these purposes Baptism has been given to men.[99] Baptism is the putting on of Christ, aptly described by the name given it by men—Christening. Without this conformity to Christ [100] there can be no birth in the spiritual life, and there can be no conformity to Christ without incorporation into Christ. Baptism, therefore, as the means of incorporation into Christ is necessary for the beginning of the spiritual life and holds the first place in the order of reception of the Sacraments.

In every Sacrament three things may be considered: namely, that which is *sacrament only* (*sacramentum tantum*); that which is *reality and sacrament* (*res et sacramentum*); that which is *reality only* (*res tantum*). That which is *sacrament only* is something visible and outward; the sign, namely, of the inward effect; for such is the very nature of a Sacrament. That which is *reality and sacrament* is the thing signified and signifying. It is something real signified by the outward sign and further signifying the inward effect. That which is *reality only* is the reality signified and not signifying further.[101]

In Baptism the *sacrament only* is both the water itself and its use—the very application of the water to man, the use, of course, implying the form of the Sacrament, the appropriate words.[102] The *reality and sacrament* is the Baptismal character. The *reality only* in this Sacrament is the inward justification of which the Baptismal character is a sacramental sign.[103]

[96] *Ibid.*, III, q. 68, a. 9.
[97] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 65, a. 1.
[98] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 66, a. 3.
[99] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 69, a. 9, ad 1um.
[100] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 49, a. 3, ad 3um.
[101] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 66, a. 1.
[102] Cf. *Council of Trent*, sess. 7, canon 2; Denzinger, *op. cit.*, n. 858.
[103] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 66, a. 1.

The Sacrament of Baptism, then, is a Sacrament of washing, "whereby to signify the inward washing away of sins." [104] In its very nature is embodied the idea of a cleansing, for it signifies this, and every Sacrament effects what it signifies.[105] Baptism cleanses man of sin and confers on him a life of grace. In virtue of this grace infused in Baptism the baptized dies to the old Adam to rise to the New Adam, exemplifying a twofold mystery, the mystery of death and the mystery of life.

The first and immediate signification of Baptism and consequently its direct and principal effect is the inward cleansing of the soul.[106] This inward cleansing of the soul is substantially one act [107] with the twofold aspect of death to sin and life to grace which is signified by the rite of Baptism—"the outward washing of the body done together with the prescribed form of words." [108] Baptism, then, is a participation in the death of Christ, so that man might rise to life in Christ. "By Baptism man is made conformable to Christ's Passion and Resurrection, in so far as he dies to sin and begins to live anew unto righteousness." [109] As it was necessary for Christ to die that He might rise to glory, so it is necessary for man to die to sin to rise to life. Grace or life, then, may be considered as the formal element in this act, while the remission of sin or death is the material element. St. Thomas clarifies this question by showing the interrelation of these causes:

> As regards the order of the formal cause, positive effects are naturally prior to privative effects, though according to the order of the material cause, the reverse is the case: for a form does not exclude privation save by informing the subject.[110]

Again, this may be looked at in another manner on the part of the agent who, as St. Thomas asserts:

> by the form preexisting in it, acts for the removal of the opposite form. . . . And since the infusion of grace and the remission of sin

[104] *Ibid.*, a. 7.

[105] Cf. *Council of Trent*, sess. 7, canon 6; Denzinger, *op. cit.*, n. 849.

[106] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 38, a. 2, ad 1um.

[107] Cf. *ibid.*, I-II, q. 113, a. 6, ad 2um.

[108] *Ibid.*, III, q. 66, a. 1.

[109] *Ibid.*, a. 3, ad 3um.

[110] *Ibid.*, q. 62, a. 6, ad 3um.

regard God Who justifies, hence in the order of nature the infusion of grace is prior to the freeing from sin. But if we look at what is on the part of man justified, it is the other way about, since in the order of nature the being freed from sin is prior to the obtaining of justifying grace.[111]

Hence in the Sacrament of Baptism the primary effect entertains a twofold significance—the severance of the bond with sin and the consummation of the mystical union with Christ.[112] This is the basic effect of the Sacrament, and from this first effect all the other effects of Baptism naturally result.[113]

Since Baptism is called the "Sacrament of Faith," [114] it is evident that there exists a special relationship between Baptism and faith. Therefore a consideration of this relationship and the relationship which exists between the Mystical Body and these two realities linking the members with Christ is necessary. While Baptism as a sign (*sacramentum*) is the instrumental efficient cause of this new relationship with Christ, it is true that incorporation into the Mystical Body is made through faith also.[115] In Baptism incorporation is made through the use of external things; in faith incorporation is accomplished through an internal act of the soul. St. Thomas states the fact in these words:

The power of Christ's Passion is united to us by faith and the sacraments, but in different ways; because the link that comes from faith is produced by an act of the soul: whereas the link that comes from the sacraments is produced by making use of exterior things.[116]

For St. Thomas, then, faith is truly a contact with Christ, a real psychological contact. "This contact by faith makes man susceptible to the influences of Christ; . . . it is the first grafting of man on Christ." [117] "The first principle by which God is in us is faith, therefore faith is called the principle of living." [118]

[111] *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 113, a. 8, ad 1um.
[112] Cf. *ibid.*, III, q. 69, a. 1.
[113] Cf. *ibid.*, a. 6, Sed Contra.
[114] Cf. *ibid.*, III, q. 66, a. 1.
[115] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 68, a. 1, ad 1um.
[116] *Ibid.*, q. 62, a. 6.
[117] A. Vonier, *A Key to the Doctrine of the Eucharist* (London: 1925), p. 4.
[118] St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, *Galatians*, iii, 12.

Faith sets up a union with Christ. Therefore, it is certainly a means of incorporation into Christ. Nevertheless, faith, as such a means, has incorporated men into Christ in a different manner.

> Before Christ's coming, men were incorporated in Christ by faith in His future coming: of which circumcision was the seal, . . . whereas before circumcision was instituted, men were incorporated in Christ by faith alone, together with the offering of sacrifices, by means of which the Fathers of old made profession of their faith. Again, since Christ's coming, men are incorporated by faith. . . . But the faith in a thing already present is manifested by a sign different from that by which it was manifested when that thing was yet in the future.[119]

This latter, then, has reference to the Sacrament of Baptism, "without the desire of which they (men) could not have been incorporated in Him even mentally"[120] through faith. For St. Thomas this incorporation through faith joined with the desire for Baptism differs from the incorporation which takes place through the conferring of the Sacrament itself:

> Adults who already believe in Christ are incorporated in Him mentally. But afterwards, when they are baptized, they are incorporated in Him corporally as it were, i. e., by the visible Sacrament.[121]

It is important, then, to note the relation existing between faith and Baptism. In the present order both are necessary in some manner for incorporation into Christ whether mentally or corporally. In order for faith to effect incorporation into Christ Baptism is necessary at least in desire. In some way Baptism must be received either in reality or in desire, "which desire is the outcome of faith that worketh by charity."[122] If Baptism is lacking in both ways man is not incorporated into Christ either sacramentally or mentally. That Baptism incorporate one into Christ faith is necessary, even in the case of infants who, as St. Thomas says:

[119] *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 68, a. 1, ad 1um.

[120] *Ibid.*, q. 69, a. 5, ad 1um.

[121] *Ibid.*, q. 68, a. 1, ad 1um.

[122] *Ibid.*, a. 2.

believe through the Church's faith,[123] and the faith of one, indeed of the whole Church, profits the child through the operation of the Holy Ghost, Who unites the Church together, and communicates the goods of one member to another.[124]

The combination of faith and Baptism, therefore, incorporates man into Christ as His member. Right faith disposes one for his union with Christ, and the Sacrament of Baptism acts as the instrumental cause effecting this union. Faith and the " Sacrament of Faith " complement one another, as it were, in bringing men under the life-giving influences of the Head of the Mystical Body of Christ.

Since the essential effect of the Sacrament of Baptism is to incorporate men into Christ as His members,[125] and incorporation into Christ is through grace alone,[126] it is evident that Baptism gives " grace, which is the ultmate effect of the sacrament." [127] In distinction to the common effect of all the Sacraments, the building up of the unity of the Mystical Body,[128] the proper effect of Baptism is to make men members of the Mystical Body of Christ by *establishing* the bond of union between the Head and His members through the infusion of sanctifying grace. This incorporation into Christ through first grace is the proper effect of Baptism in the genus of efficient cause.

In the genus of final cause, however, this incorporation into Christ is the effect of the Eucharist. Although perfect in itself,[129] this incorporation through Baptism in relation to the incorporation of men into Christ through perfect grace and especially through glory—the proper effect of the Eucharist—may be considered imperfect.[130] Baptism, then, may be said to generate

[123] *Ibid.*, a. 73, a. 3.

[124] *Ibid.*, q. 68, a. 9, ad 2um.

[125] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 69, a. 8.

[126] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 62, a. 1.

[127] *Ibid.*, q. 68, a. 8.

[128] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 39, a. 6, ad 4um.

[129] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 70, a. 2, ad 3um.

[130] Respondetur duplicem esse incorporationem hominis cum Christo, alteram per gratiam perfectam et praecipue per gloriam, et haec est proprius effectus Eucharistiae, alteram vero imperfectam per gratiam primam et haec est proprius effectus baptismi in genere causae efficientis est autem effectus Eucharistiae in genere

men in the spiritual life with Christ, but it belongs to the Eucharist to bring them to its final perfection.[131]

With the Eucharist as its consummation, Baptism has its own proper and primary effect from which all the other effects of this Sacrament naturally result.[132] In Baptism the old life is ended; a new life begins. To the old life belongs every sin; consequently, in Baptism men die to sin.[133] By Baptism the power of Christ's Passion and death is applied to men as if they had suffered and died with Christ, and by reason of this every penalty for sin is cleansed from their souls.[134]

To incorporation into Christ St. Thomas also attributes the bestowal of the grace of the Holy Ghost and the fullness of virtues, " the habit of faith which enlightens the intellect and the supernatural fruitfulness of all their actions." [135] All this is the new life which courses through the soul of each member.

By Baptism man is born again unto the spiritual life, which is proper to the faithful. Now life is only in those members that are united to the head, from which they derive sense and movement. And therefore it follows of necessity that by Baptism man is incorporated in Christ as one of His members.—Again, just as the members derive sense and movement from the material head, so from their spiritual Head, i. e., Christ, do His members derive spiritual sense consisting in the knowledge of truth, and spiritual movement which results from the instinct of grace. And it follows from this that the baptized are enlightened by Christ as to the knowledge of truth, and made fruitful by Him with the fruitfulness of good works by the infusion of grace.[136]

Lastly, the opening of the gates of heaven to the new-born member of Christ is an effect of Baptism. This consists in the

causae finalis. Et hoc modo intelligitur D. Thomas. (D. Nugno, *Comment. in Tertiam q. 73, a. 3,* Venice: 1612. Referred to by M. Grabmann, *Die Lehre des heiligen Thomas von Aquin von der Kirche als Gotteswerk,* Regensburg: 1903, p. 282).

[131] Cf. *Summa Theol.,* III, q. 65, a. 2.

[132] Cf. *ibid.,* q. 69, a. 6, Sed Contra.

[133] Cf. *ibid.,* a. 1.

[134] Cf. *ibid.,* a. 2.

[135] Anger, *op. cit.,* p. 94. Cf. references cited.

[136] *Summa Theol.,* III, q. 69, a. 5.

removal of the obstacle of guilt and penalty attached to sin that prevents one from entering therein.[137] Every living member of Christ, therefore, is destined to live eternally with Him in His heavenly kingdom.

Such are the effects of Baptism. On cursory inspection they may appear varied and disparate, but under careful scrutiny the order and harmony existing therein quickly comes to the fore. With the incorporation into Christ as the core of the doctrine of the Sacrament of Baptism it is apparent that the remaining effects fit naturally into the scene. They all blend into one harmonious unity. They are evidence of the fact that the Sacrament of Baptism could be the effect only of Divine Wisdom and Mercy.

Baptism, although first among the Sacraments in the order of reception and generation, is not first in the order of perfection and intention.[138] To the Eucharist belongs this prerogative. The Eucharist is the term and efficient cause of all the other Sacraments.[139] This august Sacrament is "the end and consummation of all the Sacraments."[140] It is "the sacramental Bread in which all the other Sacraments are contained."[141] The Eucharist

> contains Christ Himself substantially: whereas the other sacraments contain a certain instrumental power which is a share of Christ's power. Now that which is essentially such is always of more account than that which is such by participation.[142]

The Sacrament of Baptism, therefore, as all the other Sacraments, has an intrinsic relationship and order to the Eucharist as to its end.[143]

Whatever Baptism does in the order of efficient cause is an effect of the Eucharist in some way, that is, in the order of final cause. Baptism is the Sacrament of regeneration, and by

[137] Cf. *ibid.*, a. 6.
[138] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 73, a. 5, ad 4um.
[139] Cf. *IV Sent.*, d. 8, q. 1, a. 1, ad 1um.
[140] *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 63, a. 6. Cf. *ibid.*, q. 73, a. 3.
[141] *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 83, a. 9. [142] *Ibid.*, III, q. 65, a. 3. [143] Cf. *ibid.*

this Sacrament the baptized is incorporated into Christ, yet this incorporation into Christ is in view of the reception of the Eucharist in desire. St. Thomas states:

> This sacrament (the Eucharist) has of itself the power of bestowing grace; nor does anyone possess grace before receiving this sacrament except from some desire thereof: from his own desire, as in the case of an adult; or from the Church's desire in the case of children.[144]

The power of the Sacrament of Baptism, then, is derived from the Holy Eucharist. St. Thomas again declares this when he speaks of the signification of the blood and water which flowed from the side of Christ hanging upon the Cross:

> Blood belongs to the sacrament of the Eucharist, while water belongs to the sacrament of Baptism. Yet this latter sacrament derives its cleansing virtue from the powers of Christ's blood.[145]

Baptism, being the fundamental Sacrament, incorporates men into Christ, but it pertains to the Eucharist to consummate and perfect this incorporation.

> Christ would not be joined to us so perfectly if we had only those sacraments in which Christ is joined to us through His power participated in those sacraments; and thus it is necessary that there be some sacrament in which Christ is contained not participatively, but through His Essence, that there be a perfect joining of the Head to the members.[146]

Whereas Baptism is the Sacrament of generation into the spiritual life, the Eucharist is the Sacrament of nourishment. Now,

> the one generating is not joined to the generated according to substance, but only according to power: but food is joined to the one nourished according to substance. Whence, in the Sacrament of Baptism, by which Christ regenerates to salvation, it is not Christ Himself according to his substance, but only according to

[144] *Ibid.*, q. 79, a. 1, ad 1um.

[145] *Ibid.*, q. 66, a. 3, ad 3um.

[146] *IV Sent.*, d. 10, q. 1, a. 1.

his power. But in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, which is spiritual nourishment, Christ is according to His substance.[147]

Further, it can be said that the Sacrament of Baptism is the divinely appointed instrument for preparing men for the reception of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.[148] One of its principal effects is the removal of obstacles to the reception of this Sacrament. Driving death from the soul by the conferring of the life of grace, Baptism enables man to approach to that consummate union with Christ in the Sacrament of His true Body and Blood. "By Baptism a man becomes a participator in ecclesiastical unity, wherefore also he receives the right to approach Our Lord's table." [149]

Great as is its dignity in itself and in its effects, the Sacrament of Baptism remains subordinated to the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. This Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ by reason of its content overshadows the glory that is due to Baptism. To regenerate men to life in Christ belongs to Baptism; to bring this life to its perfection and completion pertains to the Eucharist.

Baptism is the Sacrament of grace, establishing the bond of being between Christ and His members; the Eucharist is the Sacrament of charity, maintaining and increasing the bond of supernatural operation in the Mystical Body.[150]

How the Sacrament of the Eucharist accomplishes its preeminent role of supernatural action in the Mystical Body will comprise the matter of the subsequent section. As for the present section, the following words summarize the principal ideas herein contained: "By Baptism, man is ordained to the Holy Eucharist." [151]

[147] St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, *I Corinthians*, xi, 23-24.
[148] Cf. *Suma Theol.*, III, q. 73, a. 3.
[149] *Ibid.*, q. 67, a. 2.
[150] O'Connell, *op. cit.*, p. 52.
[151] *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 73, a. 3.

IV. The Holy Eucharist and the Mystical Body of Christ

The Sacrament of the true Body and Blood of Christ—" the end and consummation of all the Sacraments " [152]—has for its ultimate purpose and reality the unity of the Mystical Body of Christ.[153] To this Sacrament Christ entrusted the mission of perfecting and completing His Mystical Body—the Church. With the words—" He who eats My flesh and drinks My Blood abides in Me and I in him " and " he shall live because of Me." [154]—Christ identified the effects of this Sacrament of His true Body and Blood with the relations of the members and the Head of His Mystical Body.[155] The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, therefore, can in a special way be called " the Sacrament of the unity of the Mystical Body of Christ." [156]

The Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ contained under the species of bread and wine. The Eucharist is a true Sacrament, fulfilling the requisites for a Sacrament since it is " a sign of holy thing so far as it makes men holy," [157] and as a sign forecasts the sanctification of men in a threefold manner. " A sacrament," says St. Thomas, " is a sign that is both a reminder of the past, i. e., the passion of Christ; and an indication of that which is effected in us by Christ's passion, i. e., grace; and a prognostic, i. e., a foretelling of future glory." [158] He claims the same for the Eucharist: " O Sacred Banquet, in which Christ is received, the memory of His Passion is recalled, the soul is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given us." [159] Given as spiritual food this Sacrament is ordained for spiritual refreshment.[160] Its

[152] *Ibid.*, q. 63, a. 6.
[153] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 73, a. 3, a. 4.
[154] *John*, vi, 57-58.
[155] Cf. Sauras, *op. cit.*, p. 253, and the reference cited.
[156] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 79.
[157] *Ibid.*, q. 60, a. 2.
[158] *Ibid.*, a. 3.
[159] *Dominican Breviary* (Rome: 1930), I, 324. (Magnificat Antiphon at II Vespers of the Office of Corpus Christi, composed by St. Thomas).
[160] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 73, a. 1, a. 2.

reception is requisite for the consummation of the spiritual life,[161] just as ordinary food is necessary for the perfection of corporal life.[162] Wherefore the effects of the Eucharist in the spiritual life parallel the effects of food in corporal life. As nourishment, the Eucharist conserves life and strengthens it; [163] it gives delight at the same time that it repairs that which is lost daily by force of concupiscence.[164] The Eucharist is truly, as St. Thomas insists,[165] the Sacrament of the Mystical Body of Christ.

In the Holy Eucharist three things may be considered: namely, that which is *sacrament only*, and this is the consecrated species of bread and wine; that which is both *reality and sacrament*, namely, the true Body and Blood of Christ; and lastly, that which is the *reality only*, namely, the grace bestowed or charity uniting the soul with Christ and with His members.[166] The *sacrament only* considers the Sacrament outwardly, the sign itself which is accomplished in order to produce or attain its spiritual effect—the real presence of Christ under the species—the *reality and sacrament*, which in turn signifies and attains the inward reality of grace, the *reality only*. " The *reality only*," says St. Thomas, " is the unity of the Mystical Body." [167] How this unity of the Mystical Body is the effect of the Holy Eucharist is the burden of the following pages.

Since a Sacrament effects what it symbolizes, a clear understanding of the symbolism of the Holy Eucharist as a Sacrament will point out the precise and most proper effect—the sacramental grace—of this Sacrament. The unity of the Mystical Body of Christ is the special grace of this Sacrament. How this unity is effected through the Holy Eucharist will be illustrated through the workings of food and drink, which are the symbol of this unity attained by the Eucharist. The symbolism of bread and wine prefigures the unity of the Mystical

[161] Cf. *ibid.*, a. 3.
[162] Cf. *ibid.*, a. 1, ad 1um.
[163] Cf. *ibid.*, a. 3.
[164] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 79, a. 1.
[165] Cf. *ibid.*
[166] Cf. *ibid.*, a. 6.
[167] *Ibid.*, q. 73, a. 3.

Body, the fruit of the Sacrament, for "just as bread is composed of many grains, and wine flows from many grapes . . . we being many are . . . one body." [168] The mingling of the water with the wine is a symbol of the effect of the Sacrament. "The people are signified by the water, but Christ's blood by the wine. Therefore when water is mixed with the wine in the chalice, the people are made one with Christ." [169] Truly, then, the elements comprising the matter for this august Sacrament are most appropriate and fitting to symbolize its transcendent effect—the unity of Christ's Mystical Body.

The precise idea to be grasped here is the idea of sacramental eating, the manner in which the Eucharist is consumed by men.[170] "In this sacrament man receives Christ within himself by way of spiritual nourishment." [171] The Eucharist "was instituted . . . for nourishing spiritually through union between Christ and His members, as nourishment is united with the person nourished." [172] The importance of the fact that this Sacrament enbodies the idea of sacramental eating is fundamental. That in this Sacrament Christ is eaten after the manner of food and drink is a fact primary and essential to the understanding of this Catholic doctrine. Upon this concept depends the appreciation of the manner in which the Holy Eucharist creates an incomparable, real union of the body with Christ, accomplishing an inseparable, vital union of the soul with Christ Himself.

Since the Eucharist is given as spiritual nourishment and nourishment is given only to the living, this Sacrament is reserved for the living members of the Mystical Body—those who really are united to Christ, their Head.[173] "Whoever eats, from this very thing signifies that he is united to Christ and incorporated as His member." [174] The incorporation of men into Christ has already been effected by Baptism. The Euchar-

[168] *Ibid.*, q. 74, a. 1.
[169] *Ibid.*, q. 73, a. 6.
[170] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 79, a. 1.
[171] *Ibid.*, a. 3, ad 2um.
[172] *Ibid.*, a. 5.
[173] Cf. *ibid.*, a. 3.
[174] *Ibid.*,,q. 80, a. 4.

ist signifies complete union with the Head, the real and actual possession of Christ. In the reception of the Eucharist there is the substantial union of the member with the true and whole Body of Christ as the highest and most complete realization of union with Him. "Christ Himself substantially" [175] incorporates men into His Mystical Body in Holy Communion. Perfectly, He effects that men be one with Himself through "the most perfect food of the Mystical Body," [176] destined to bring them to "the consummation of the spiritual life." [177]

Given as food and drink, the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist may be partaken of in a twofold manner: the one sacramental whereby is received only the consecrated species; the other spiritual, whereby is received the effect of the Sacrament.[178]

> As the perfect is divided against the imperfect, so sacramental eating, whereby the sacrament *only* is received without the effect, is divided against spiritual eating, by which one receives the effect of this sacrament, whereby a man is spiritually united with Christ through faith and charity.[179]

However, this spiritual eating may in turn be subdivided. The Sacrament may be received sacramentally and spiritually.

> That sacramental eating which is also a spiritual eating is not divided in contrast with spiritual eating, but is included under it; but that sacramental eating which does not secure the effect is divided in contrast with spiritual eating.[180]

> Those eat sacramentally and spiritually who, namely, so take this sacrament, that they even participate the reality of the sacrament.[181]

Or the Sacrament may be received spiritually by the desire to receive the Body of Christ under the sacramental species. Or the Sacrament may be received by union with Christ in glory, but this would no longer be under the sacramental appearances.

175 Cf. *ibid.*, q. 65, a. 3.
176 *Ibid.*, q. 80, a. 1.
177 *Ibid.*, q. 73, a. 3.
178 Cf. *ibid.*, q. 80, a. 1, ad 3um.
179 *Ibid.*, a. 1.
180 *Ibid.*, ad 2um.
181 St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, *I Corinthians*, xi, 29.

Sacramental reception, however, is not without avail because "the actual receiving of the sacrament produces more fully the effect of the sacrament than the desire thereof." [182]

Since the nature of the Holy Eucharist and the manner in which this Sacrament is taken have been established, the proper effect of "eating Christ" can now be treated. First, the unity arising from the union of the individual member with Christ, then the unity of the members among themselves in and through Christ—both as the proper effect of the Holy Eucharist—will be studied in that order.

The proper effect—the reality—of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist is the perfection of the most excellent virtue [183]—charity—by which man adheres to Christ and to His members. The infusion or the increase of charity may be considered in two ways. Taken in a general manner, it may be considered as it is conferred by the Sacraments inasmuch as they give grace. The habit of charity of its very nature follows sanctifying grace and is commensurate to it in its grade of intensity.[184] In this way, habitual charity is the common effect of all the Sacraments. Secondly, charity may be considered inasmuch as it is the effect to which the Sacrament is ordained as to its proper end. In this case the grace of the Sacrament is directed to increase and perfect charity in itself. Hence the perfection of charity is said to be the proper effect of the Holy Eucharist.[185]

Since sacramental grace gives, over and above grace commonly so-called, a special help to attain the end of the Sacrament,[186] the Holy Eucharist confers a special aid in attaining its proper end. This aid given by the Eucharist is twofold: a habitual help and an actual help. "The reality of this sacrament is charity, not only as to its habit, but also to its act, which is kindled in this sacrament." [187]

[182] *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 80, a. 1, ad 3um.
[183] Cf. *ibid.*, II-II, q. 23, a. 6; q. 24, a. 4, ad 2um.
[184] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 24, a. 6, ad 3um; I-II, q. 66, a. 2, ad 1um.
[185] Cf. L. Billot, *De Ecclesiae Sacramentis* (Rome: 1906), I, 530.
[186] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 62, a. 2.
[187] *Ibid.*, q. 79, a. 4.

The habitual help, although it cannot be explained determinately with all certitude, can conveniently be said to be "a common disposition, curative of that egoism by which man inordinately adheres to himself alone, and limits his affections to himself alone." [188] Since the Sacraments have been instituted as a remedy against the defects caused by sin,[189] each Sacrament binds that wound of fallen nature contrary to the proper end of the particular Sacrament. Consequently it seems that the Eucharist has been instituted as the medical ligature of that wound of corrupt nature from which each one is prone to refer all things to himself as an end, since nothing is more impeditive of love of God and of neighbor than love of self.[190]

The actual help flowing from "the eating of Christ" is the fervor of charity which this Sacrament in its very application is ordained to excite. "The actual effect is the fervor of charity." [191] Fervor is here taken metaphorically, the analogy being drawn from liquid which fills a vase to overflowing and flows outside the container: inasmuch as then charity is said to be fervent, when through its proper act one goes forth outside himself, as it were, in referring all his affections to God loved above all things.[192] "Consequently, through this sacrament, as far as its power is concerned, not only is the habit of grace and of virtue bestowed, but it is furthermore aroused to act." [193] "Habitual grace is conferred; . . . the actual fervor of devotion is excited." [194]

The proper effect of the Eucharist is the perfecting of charity and the effect of charity or love is union,[195] for love is a unitive force,[196] and unity is the principle of union.[197] Therefore it is

[188] Billot, *loc. cit.*

[189] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 65, a. 1.

[190] Cf. Billot, *loc. cit.*

[191] *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 79, a. 8, ad 2um.

[192] Cf. Billot, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 541.

[193] *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 79, a. 1, ad 2um.

[194] *IV Sent.*, d. 12, q. 2, a. 1, ad 2um.

[195] Cf. St. Thomas, *In Evangelium S. Joannis Commentaria* (3rd ed.) (Turin: 1919), III, vi, 55.

[196] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 25, a. 4.

[197] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 26, a. 6.

evident that the Eucharist properly makes the person receiving it one with Christ. Through charity or love man is transformed into Christ as the lover is transformed into the beloved. To the perfection of love belongs a mutual adhesion by which the lover remains in the beloved, and the beloved is in the lover through a certain complacency or contentment, which is to say the transformation of the lover into the beloved. "Love is nothing other than a certain transformation of the affection into the thing loved."[198] "It denotes a certain union of affections between the lover and the beloved, inasmuch as the lover deems the beloved as somewhat united to him, and so tends towards him."[199] The lover, thus, considers or evaluates the will and the good of his friend as his own. He can be said to be in the beloved as pursuing that which is most intimate to the beloved. On the other hand, the beloved can be said to be in him, for he wishes and acts for his friend as for himself, regarding his friend to be the same as himself. Thus the beloved is in the lover as impressed on his affections through a certain complacency. Such is the effect of charity, and such is the effect of the Eucharist in the one communicating, "who from his own form in some manner recedes so that he may be transformed into Christ beloved, as being loosed from that by which he is contained within himself."[200]

This transformation of man by the Holy Eucharist is made not only through habitual love, but also through the act of charity, for this Sacrament not only effects an increase of the habit of charity but even excites the one partaking Christ to act—second act or the actual operation of charity.

The perfection of the Christian life is twofold: habitual and actual. Habitual perfection consists essentially in sanctifying grace alone, but consequently in charity and the other infused virtues. Specially and principally this perfection consists in charity. This habitual perfection can be said to consist in an habitual disposition through which man is so disposed that

[198] *III Sent.*, d. 27, q. 1, a. 1.
[199] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 27, a. 2.
[200] Billot, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, 533.

through operation he unites himself perfectly to God. Actual perfection consists in actual operation through which man is united to God and subjected to Him, because his perfection which is from the principle and to the principle, consists in being joined to his principle and end, because of which he was made and is.[201]

Since " operation is the second perfection of a thing " [202] and " formally charity is the life of the soul," [203] the ultimate perfection of the spiritual life or the perfect union with Christ consists in the act of charity. Thus the perfection of the unity of the members of the Mystical Body with Christ consists in the greater actuality of the bond constituting this mystical union, for " charity increases only by its subject partaking more and more, that is, by being more reduced to its act and more subject thereto." [204] The bond being charity, the more charity is in act, the stronger is the bond, the greater is the unity existing between Christ and His members. Now this more fervent act, which alone causes charity to be increased and thus to have a greater hold on the soul,[205] is the direct and actual effect of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. For this reason, that it has as its actual effect the fervor of charity over and above the habitual effect of the habit of charity, the Eucharist is said to cause the perfection of the Mystical Body rather than the Sacrament of Baptism which is spiritual generation, through which is acquired as its proper effect only the first perfection, a habit or form.[206]

The conclusion that this spiritual transformation of men into Christ is made through charity which is the *reality* (*res*) of the Eucharist is substantiated by the theological reason that the effect proper to each of the Sacraments ought to be taken from the similitude of the corporal effect to which its matter is naturally ordained; for a Sacrament signifies symbolically, that is, after the manner of some analogy, by reason of the

[201] Cf. P. M. Passerini, *De Hominum Statibus et Officiis* (Luca. 1732), I, 19 ff.

[202] *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 78, a. 1, ad 2um.

[203] *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 23, a. 2, ad 2um.

[204] *Ibid.*, q. 25, a. 5.

[205] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 24, a. 5, ad 3um.

[206] Cf. *ibid.*, III, q. 79, a. 8, ad 2um.

matter and its use. The Eucharist transforms men into Christ after the manner of corporal food and drink. Food is ordained to the refection of the body through a physical conversion of the taken food into the substance of the one partaking it. The sacramental effect of the Eucharist, therefore, proportionally consists in the refection of the soul of the communicant through some spiritual conversion or transformation. Nevertheless, there is this transcendent difference to be noted: The transformation effected by the Eucharist is not made through a conversion of the spiritual food into the one communicating, but vice versa; the one communicating is converted into Christ, Who is the spiritual food, for when two things are joined the weaker is always changed into the stronger.[207]

This sublime thought has been summarized thus:

> The whole of the bread and wine Christ has changed into His substance, so that being made our food He might transform into Himself the entire heart of man, his whole mind and all the affections of his soul. The transsubstantiation of the elements is the miracle of the Eucharist; the transformation of souls is the end and fruit of the most divine Eucharist. "I am the food of the strong," God told Augustine, "nor do you change Me into yourself as the food of your flesh; but you are changed into Me." We change carnal foods into our substance; but the divine food of the Eucharist changes those who eat it into Itself, since without a doubt natural heat digests corporal food and by its action impresses (upon it) the characteristics of the animal whose instrument it is. But Christ, the bread of Angels, is really received by the mouth, nevertheless He is digested only by the fire of love: love moreover transforms the one loving into the things loved: hence if Christ is eaten as He should be, the one eating is entirely changed into Christ.[208]

Further, from the analogy of the effects of the Eucharist to the effects of food and drink, it can be said that the *reality* (*res*) of the Eucharist related to the habit of charity has the effect of habitually refreshing the one taking it. Besides this habitual effect resulting from the partaking of food there is

[207] Cf. St. Thomas, *op. cit., John* vi, 55; Billot, *op. cit.*, I, 533 ff.

[208] V. Contenson, *Theologia Mentis et Cordis* (Paris: 1875), IV, 83.

also an actual refreshment which anyone in good health experiences in the very act of eating. In the Eucharist this actual effect is the actual refreshment of spiritual sweetness, that is, the act of charity and its consequent delight experienced by anyone who approaches this Sacrament free from the distraction of venial sins, in robust spiritual health.[209] This is the spiritual delectation which Christ Himself experienced when He partook of this Sacrament.[210]

Continuing the analogy of spiritual refection with corporal refection, the *reality* (*res*) of the Eucharist can be said to refresh the soul in four respects. " The grace of this sacrament," says St. Thomas, " refreshes the soul in all respects: by sustaining, giving increase, restoring, and giving delight." [211]

The *reality* (*res*) of the Eucharist *sustains* the habitual union of charity by giving an increase of this virtue, and partly even from the more fervent act of charity to which man in communicating is excited. By directly strengthening the bond of union between the one communicating and Christ, it preserves him from sin and lessens the inclination to sin as a consequence.[212]

This Sacrament, containing Christ Himself and representing His Passion, the cause of grace, *increases* grace and perfects the spiritual life " so that man may stand perfect in himself by union with God." [213]

The *reality* (*res*) of the Eucharist, further, *repairs* that which is " lost daily of our spirituality from the heat of concupiscence through venial sins which lessen the fervor of charity." [214] This is effected not through the increase of the habit but through the more fervent act to which venial sin is opposed.[215]

The *delight* resulting from the reception of this Sacrament

[209] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 70, a. 8.
[210] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 81, a. 1, ad 3um.
[211] *Ibid.*, q. 73, a. 6; q. 79, a. 1.
[212] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 79, a. 6, corp.; ad 3um.
[213] *Ibid.*, a. 1, ad 1um.
[214] *Ibid.*, a. 4.
[215] Cf. *ibid.*, ad 1um; I-II, q. 89, a. 2, ad 3um.

proceeds from the fervent acts of love to which one communicating is excited. Delight or joy is caused by actual love both because of the presence of the good loved, and even because the lover's own good is present to this good loved and conserved by it.[216] However, that charity which is excited in the one communicating is the love of Christ Whose good is immutable, since He is His goodness; and the object of that love is present to the one loving Him as possessed by him.[217] "Hence it is that the soul is . . . through the power of this sacrament . . . spiritually gladdened, and as it were inebriated with the sweetness of Divine goodness." [218]

To this point, the doctrine of the transformation of man into Christ through charity—the effect of the Holy Eucharist—has been established. It has been shown that the Eucharist exercises its proximate and immediate function as the spiritual nourishment and growth to perfection of the union existing between the individual soul and Christ. This is the first of the twofold unity present in the Mystical Body. The first unity is a prerequisite, as it were, for attaining the second unity of its members among themselves, for the whole Mystical Body can achieve its corporate perfection and completion only through the integrity and perfection of the individual members.[219] This second unity, the union of the members among themselves, is the perfection and completion of the Mystical Body which is the ultimate purpose and reality of the Holy Eucharist, for it is the same reason of union with Christ, and with His members. Wherefore, since the *reality* (*res*) of the Eucharist is the perfect union of the one communicating to Christ through love, in this very thing is the perfect union among the members, that is to say, the unity of the Mystical Body.[220]

The sign of spiritual nutrition of the soul through union with Christ, the Eucharist is at the same time the sign of the

[216] Cf. Billot, *op. cit.*, I, 536 ff.
[217] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 28, a. 1.
[218] *Ibid.*, III, q. 79, a. 1, ad 2um.
[219] Cf. St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, *Ephesians*, iv, 16.
[220] Cf. Billot, *op. cit.*, p. 540.

joining (*coagmentatio*) of the whole Mystical Body of which Christ is the Head. Continuing the analogy to the workings of corporal food which the Eucharist effects in the spiritual order, it can be said that

> just as natural food, diffusing its power through the whole body, nourishes each member taken not only solitarily but even according to the proportion which each member has to the other members whose cohesion and mutual love it conserves and fosters, so also the Eucharist, by signifying the nourishment of souls through perfect incorporation into Christ, in this very thing signifies the grace by which each soul not only lives in itself, thence as if it were alone in this world, but is even conjoined to other souls incorporated in Christ, and adheres to them by this linking of charity. Wherefore, the *reality* (*res*) of the Eucharist is grace or charity joining (*coagmentans*) each one with Christ and with His members.[221]

Charity, the reality of the Eucharist, can effect this twofold unity in this manner because charity is a single virtue.[222] The love of God and the love of one's neighbor are not two different virtues but are one and the same, "for God is the principal object of charity while our neighbor is loved out of charity for God's sake."[223] Thus "the aspect under which our neighbor is to be loved is God, since what we ought to love in our neighbor is that he may be in God. Hence . . . it is specifically the same act whereby we love God, and whereby we love our neighbor."[224]

The Eucharist, therefore, is the one same source of uniting each individual member with the Head and of establishing the most ideal and perfect union among the members of Christ's Mystical Body. Through this Sacrament men communicate with and are united to one another[225] and thus are made the one Body of Christ, for it is "the food of unity, by which those who are refreshed are made of one soul[226] through the adhesion

[221] *Ibid.*, p. 210.
[222] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 23, a. 5; q. 25, a. 1.
[223] *Ibid.*, q. 23, a. 5, ad 1um.
[224] *Ibid.*, q. 25, a. 1.
[225] Cf. *ibid.*, III, q. 73, a. 4.
[226] St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, *John*, vi, 53.

and fervor of charity,[227] which in itself is the fellowship of the spiritual life." [228]

St. Thomas summarizes the foregoing through the similitude which it has to the natural body of man and goes on to demonstrate how the Mystical Body of Christ is one. A natural body is made one from many members in three modes: 1) through a joining together; 2) through a bond joining the members into a unit; 3) through mutual operation and asistance—all of which are from the corporal head. The Mystical Body of Christ, then, is made one in the same three modes. As flowing from Christ the Head: 1) the joining together of the Mystical Body is through faith; 2) the bond or connection is through faith and charity, which connect and join the members for the mutual Christian ministry, because of the necessity that things united be joined by some bond; 3) the mutual operation and assistance are through the Christian ministering of the works of charity, for which reason the virtue of actually operating flows spiritually. Then St. Thomas adds:

> Not only from our Head Christ is the joining together through faith of the members of the Church, not only a connection or binding through mutual subministration through charity; but certainly from Him is the actual operation of the members, or the motion to the work according to the measure and competence of each member. Whence . . . He makes the increase of the body according to the operation and measure of each member duly measured; because not only through faith is the Mystical Body joined together, not only through the connecting ministration of charity is the body increased, but through the actual composition proceeding forth from each member, according to the measure of the grace given to him, which God makes in us. For what does God increase each member? That the body be built.[229]

This power of Christ the Head is exercised over the members of His Mystical Body through the seven Sacraments. This unity, therefore, is brought about by the Sacraments, for their

[227] *Ibid.*, xv, 9.
[228] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 25, a. 2, ad 2um.
[229] St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, *Ephesians*, iv, 16.

common effect is the building up of the Mystical Body.[230] Yet these three modes of unity flow from Christ to His members especially through the Holy Eucharist, which contains Christ Himself, for the Eucharist applies the whole power of Christ's Passion to His members.[231] Properly, however, the union through faith pertains to Baptism, the Sacrament of Faith; the union through charity properly pertains to the Holy Eucharist, the Sacrament of Charity. Above all, the ministering to one another of the members through their actual operation by which " we being many are one body " [232] is properly the effect of the Holy Eucharist. Through the Eucharist the very motion to operate through charity is given, for the *reality* of this Sacrament is the operation or the second act of charity which is love.

The Eucharist, therefore, through its *reality* (*res*) effects a certain union of affections among the members of the Mystical Body inasmuch as each member deems the other members somewhat united to him, or belonging to him, and so tends towards them not only habitually but even actually.[233] Each member, therefore, lives in Christ, as a member of His Mystical Body and through Christ lives in fellowship and unity with the other members. In the likeness of Christ, he ever operates through charity towards his fellow-members, seeking the perfect good—the good of the whole—rather than his individual, partial good which is the cause of division in Christ's Mystical Body.[234] The Eucharist, then,

> ought to revive in the soul of the faithful the feeling of their divine solidarity in Christ, a deep sentiment of union to all their brothers in the faith, a feeling of strong love, tender love, devoted and efficacious, which disposes them to intend and procure, each for his own part, the divine good of the whole Mystical Body.[235]

[230] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 39, a. 6, ad 4um.
[231] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 79, a. 1; St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, *John*, vi, 52.
[232] St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, *I Corinthians*, x, 17.
[233] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 27, a. 2.
[234] Cf. St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, *I Corinthians*, i, 10.
[235] Mura, *op. cit.*, I, 186.

In this way alone can the members obtain the individual effects of the Eucharist, for

> to obtain the individual effects of the Sacrament the one communicating must communicate to the group, that is, to the whole Christ, by communicating to Christ as He is, universal man, first-born of many brothers, by accepting the love, and by responding to love such as is in the intention of the Creator-Love.[236]

As an effect of the Holy Eucharist, each member actually tends towards the other members out of charity as the principal motive in spirit and in deed. Their inward acts as well as their outward acts whereby they live in communion with one another [237] emanate from their communion with Christ clothed with charity and ordained by charity to their last end.[238] "From charity all proceed as from a principle, and in charity all are ordained as to an end." [239] To act as an efficient cause in commanding the acts of the other virtues by which each member helps and gives assistance to the other members pertains to charity. Thus, the Holy Eucharist through its *reality* (*res*) effects an increase of good works towards one another on the part of the members of Christ's Mystical Body, and when man increases in good works and in grace proportionate to this, the unity of the Mystical Body increases and grows strong,[240] for this is the collaboration of the works of charity through which "we being many are one body." [241]

Through charity, therefore the *reality* (*res*) of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist perfects and completes the Mystical Body of Christ. Charity perfects the Mystical Body by knitting the members into the closest possible union with the Head and with one another. Charity completes the Mystical Body by bringing the ever-increasing members par-

[236] Sertillanges, "L'Eucharistie et l'Eglise," *La Vie Spirituelle,* XL (1934), 120-121.

[237] Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 100, a. 2.

[238] Cf. *ibid.*, II-II, q. 23, a. 8.

[239] St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, *John,* xv, 12.

[240] St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, *Ephesians,* ii, 21.

[241] Cf. St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, *I Corinthians,* x, 17.

taking of the Eucharist to the numerical completion of the predestined. The vital processes toward this perfection and completion are the mysterious workings of Eucharistic grace, bringing to its plenitude the operation of the Mystical Body.[242] The Eucharist, then, is by Divine dispensation the true source of charity uniting the Head and the members of the Mystical Body "unto the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ." [243]

V. Conclusion

In these pages the roles of the Sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Eucharist in constituting the unity of the Mystical Body of Christ have been considered in the light of the principles of St. Thomas. Since both Sacraments are said to be the Sacraments of Incorporation into the Mystical Body, the intriguing and theologically fruitful question arises of wherein their differences lie and how each effects this incorporation.

Evidence has been advanced within the limited proportions of this study to prove that the Sacrament of Baptism is the Sacrament of birth into Christ's Mystical Body through the bestowal of first grace, the basis for this union between Christ and His members. Baptism infuses the fundament for perfect incorporation into Christ by giving the habit or form. The Holy Eucharist perfects and consummates this incorporation through the conferring of an increase of grace and the virtues and by further exciting the communicant to more fervent acts of charity. Baptism inaugurates the union; the Holy Eucharist completes it.

The dominant effect of the Holy Eucharist as the source, the end, the beginning, and the consummation of the unity existing in the Mystical Body of Christ forms the basis of these brief theological considerations, as it does of all those living in God through Christ Jesus. The whole Christian life is centered about the Eucharist. Symbolic of the Passion of Christ, the Eucharist continues to show forth the greatest manifes-

[242] Cf. St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, *Ephesians*, i, 23.

[243] *Ephesians*, iv, 13.

tation of Christ's love for men in applying its effects to men. Containing the Source of grace, the Eucharist necessarily carries to men the merits of Christ accomplished through His Passion and Death upon the Cross. Conferring the fullness of grace, the Eucharist places in men—to the highest degree attainable in this life—friendship with God and fellowship among men. At the same time it is a pledge of the fruition of eternal happiness and consummate union of the blessed in heaven. This is the proper end of the Sacrament of the true Body and Blood of Christ.

Likewise, this is the end of the Mystical Body of Christ—eternal glory. When the last man has received the fulfillment of the pledge of that which "eye has not seen nor ear heard," [244] then, and only then, will Christ be complete. In that day the Mystical Body of Christ will have received its goal of actual union with Christ through the continual operation of the intellect and will of the elect in thought and love for all eternity. At the moment eternity begins the Eucharist will have achieved its end; the Mystical Body will have reached its consummation. God's plan will be completed, "according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord." [245]

JOHN T. DITTOE, O. P.

Dominican House of Studies,
Washington, D. C.

[244] *I Corinthians,* ii, 9.
[245] *Ephesians,* iii, 11.

ON DARKNESS, SILENCE, AND THE NOUGHT

THE vocabulary of many languages lists a noun: " the " Nought, *das Nichts, le néant.* Thus it seems that, in some sense, that which is nothing must be something after all, else one could not give it a name. This apparent contradiction is one reason why the question of the Nought has recurred frequently in philosophical speculation. There are other reasons too. One is connected with the problem of a finite universe: if the universe has boundaries, and comprises by definition all that is, then it must be, one is forced to suppose, " surrounded " by the Nought. Here again, the Nought seems to become something. Within Christian philosophy the doctrine was and is that God created the world " out of nothing." It is easy to conceive of the Nought, in this sentence, as a kind of material God used to make the world. In fact, such ideas were considered by earlier thinkers. There is, furthermore, the problem of evil. At least since St. Augustine, it has been a common doctrine that evil as such has no existence; it is purely negative, the *privatio boni.* What exists has goodness, and evil is the absence of a higher goodness which ought to exist here and there. But this absence of the desired or necessary good is intensely felt; it becomes the content of a positive experience, although it is " nothing."

In recent times the problem of the Nought has come to the fore in the philosophy of " existentialism," particularly in the views of Martin Heidegger. Apart from the peculiar place the idea of the Nought holds within the system of this thinker, it is the phenomenological analysis of dread, as given by him, which has made the Nought a topic of renewed discussion. Heidegger claims, herein obviously dependent on Kierkegaard, that in dread man has an experience of the Nought.

It seems worth while to reconsider the problem. In so doing

a promising approach may be furnished through a description of experiences the reports on which contain the word "nothing." I shall try to clarify the meaning of some of such statements.

In the field of sensory awareness only the two "higher" senses, sight and hearing, furnish experiences described by the term "nothing." In darkness and in silence we apparently become aware of "nothing." The precise meaning of this statement, at first sight self-contradictory, will be investigated later. But there is no such experience in the fields of the other senses. We may disregard the senses of smell and taste, as well as that of temperature, because the "something" of which they render us cognizant hardly deserves to be called a "thing." The data provided by these senses (and one may add the sense of pain as well as somaesthesia) refer only to properties, not to things in the strict sense of the name. We know of course that some fragrance originates in a thing, which therefore we expect; but to become aware of the thing and not only of its fragrance we have to look. Taste tells us about things only in virtue of its data being referred to or associated with previous non-gustatory experiences, again mostly of sight. The same is true of the sense of thermaesthesia.

When we do not sense any temperature, or taste anything, or smell anything, we usually do not say that we are aware of "nothing." We may say so, eventually, when something is brought into contact with our tongue and proves to have no taste; but what we really mean is not that we are aware of the non-taste, but that we are not conscious of any gustatory experience. The statement does not refer to the objective, but only to the subjective side of our experience. We assert the absence of any experience belonging to the class of taste. The same applies to smell. With tactual and kinaesthetic data the same conditions prevail. There is no experience of the absence of weight, for instance, or of the fact that nothing touches us, or that we do not touch anything. If we lift a thing which has "no weight" we report not on an experience whose object

would be the zero-weight, but state that we have no experience belonging to the class of those we know to originate when a weight is lifted.

However, when we " see nothing," that is, find ourselves immersed in complete darkness, we have a very positive experience. The same is true of the experience of silence. Thus, one is led to the conclusion that there exists some kind of experience, in the fields of vision and hearing, the object of which is " nothing." The meaning of this must be discovered.

I

There are two ways of " seeing nothing." We see nothing back of our head (or outside the boundaries of the " visual field ") ; but this absence of visual impression is not correctly described by the words " seeing nothing " ; rather it is covered by the formula " not seeing at all." The other way is indeed a manner of seeing, namely the peculiar visual experience we have when looking into perfect darkness or seeing absolute black.[1]

If the experience we describe as " seeing darkness " (this term as well as that of black will be taken here to mean " perfect " darkness or blackness, that is, the absolute absence of any trace of light) is truly what it is supposed to be, namely, the awareness of perfect black, it cannot be described. It is as simple and escapes analysis as much as does the awareness of any color or of white light. We can never describe redness; we can only point it out. Only those color impressions which appear as composites allow for further characterization. Thus, orange may be described as a mixture of red and yellow. But this is not a true description; it is a statement on the place this particular hue holds in the order of colors, or perhaps, a statement on the genesis of it.[2]

[1] This question is of interest to various disciplines: to the physiology and psychology of vision, to speculative psychology, and to metaphysics. The strictly physiological facts will be considered here only insofar as they may contribute to our understanding of the experience itself.

[2] It deserves to be noted that we use to " describe " colors terms taken from other

The first question which arises is one merely of fact. Do we ever become aware of perfect darkness? It has been claimed that any such statement is, in truth, the result of erroneous judgment: we do not see perfect black but only a very dark grey. It is, of course, possible to produce conditions in which no light whatsoever reaches our eyes. We can place an observer in a room from which all light is absolutely excluded, the walls of which are covered with black velvet, and in which all objects are painted a dull black. Nonetheless, some declare, we do not see true black.

There are, first, certain subjective light phenomena, photismata. In regard to them one observes great individual differences. With some people they are very marked and luminous, often brilliantly colored. But they never fill the whole visual field; they appear as floating before a black background. Also, they are easily and unerringly distinguished from the surrounding " objective " black. These phenomena, therefore, can be disregarded.

But it is claimed that even when such photismata are absent and the observer believes he sees an uninterrupted and complete black, he actually does not see black but the " subjective grey." This phenomenon is explained as the effect of an " endogenous excitation " of the cortical regions where the nervous pathways of vision end (in the occipital part of the brain).[3]

This theory is open to two objections. First, it seems to me, and it seemed the same way to several other observers, that we indeed " see " perfect black; not always, indeed, and often

sensory fields; thus we may say that one color is " warm " and another " cold." There are further notes, in certain color experiences, which pertain not to the color as such but to its mode of appearance, as for instance the same red which is presented one time as a " surface color " and another time as a colored medium (when we look into it, e. g., a colored solution). Some aspects of these phenomena will be touched upon later, since they have a definite bearing on the problems to be discussed.

[3] David Katz, *The World of Colour*, London, 1935, Trans. R. B. MacLeod and C. W. Fox, p. 58 ff. Katz refers to an older study by G. E. Müller, " Zur Psychophysik der Gesichtsempfindungen," *Zschr. f. Psychol*, 1897, XIV, 40.

not as an uninterrupted mass of darkness, but often enough and consistently enough to warrant the statement that black and not grey is " seen " under such conditions. Secondly, even if these observations were deceptive, and what is actually seen is a very dark grey, there would still remain the problem: how do we realize that something is " *not* perfect black " if this datum is never experienced? It would seem that such a statement is based on some knowledge concerning perfect black. If no such knowledge exists, there is no possibility of recognizing the difference between the subjective grey and true black. This objection is not countered by saying that we do not realize the difference between the grey we experience and the black which is beyond possible experience, but the " admixture of white light." Admixture to what? We are thrown back into the same dilemma.

It may be noted also that we do not gauge darkness by the minimum of light it still contains. A very dark grey, which one commonly would call black, is not defined, and does not appear, as a white of a minimum degree; rather the white component, if it is observed at all, appears as a kind of " impurity," clearly as an admixture to the black. This simple datum of experience seems to point to a knowledge of perfect black.

It is, however, generally admitted that perfect black may be seen, subjectively, by way of simultaneous contrast. The most perfect impression of black may be attained by contrast. If these were the only conditions under which perfect black is seen, the situation for the physiologist might become easier. He would no longer be faced with the difficulty of explaining a positive impression dependent on the absence of stimulation, or any similar organic process. But the situation remains unchanged for the psychologist. Whether by contrast or in virtue of " objectively existing " blackness, there is the experience of black, still demanding interpretation.[4]

[4] If simultaneous contrast were to be explained, as in the theory of Helmholtz, by non-physiological, i. e., purely mental, factors, the physiologist would not need to concern himself with the problem at all.

Black and darkness are experienced as "something." They are phenomena in the strict sense of the word,—"something appearing" or presented. Black is as much "outside" and "there" as any color is. Although we say, when surrounded by complete darkness, "I see nothing," it is more correct to say, "I see black."

The phrase "I see nothing" is ambiguous. It refers to situations very different in nature. These words are used mostly to express that we do not see some definite thing we expected to see or the presence of which is claimed by another. The physician examining a person complaining of a sore throat may say that he sees nothing, that is, no abnormality. In fact he sees many things. So does one on the lookout for a ship who, sweeping the horizon, says he sees nothing, namely, no ship. We use the same expression in darkness because we want to see certain things and are unable to do so. But actually we see the darkness.

Although darkness, surrounding us, shares certain properties with other instances of both "space-filling" and "expanded" colors, it differs from these in other regards. The first fact to be noted is that darkness is, at the same time, an expanded color (one may safely use this term, since the impression is, for the apprehending mind, the same as in the case of true colors) and a space-filling one. Expanded color is observed when we look, for instance at the clear sky above us, seeing nothing but it, or when we look through the closed eyelids at a light and see nothing but a homogeneous red. One can easily create corresponding conditions for other colors, when one has an observer look at a wholly uniformly colored surface large enough to fill the visual field.

In the last-named case and also, to a degree, when we look at the sky, there is a remnant of the characteristics of surface colors; the sky appears somehow like a vault; the look going out at the uniform color somehow "hits" a resistance. Furthermore, there is in both these instances localization in space; sky and wall appear at a certain distance. Even the red seen

through the lids is somewhere in space, although the impression of distance is very vague and somewhat reminiscent of that attached to memory images.

Darkness utterly lacks this note of distance. It begins, so to speak, immediately before our eyes. It is expanded, since it fills, without any differentiation, the whole of our visual field. But it also has, curiously, depth; the look " penetrates " into it. There is nothing of " hardness " in it; darkness rather has a note of softness.

Darkness has in common with the expanded colors the absence of structure; it is homogeneous. It shares with the space-filling colors their characteristic property in a rather paradoxical manner, since it reveals somehow space without permitting this space to become actually visible. In all other instances of such colors the look actually penetrates into space; even when a fog is so dense that no thing can be seen, it allows the awareness of some distance. If one looks straight ahead when swimming under water one looks into a greenish space-filling matter; there is no definite distance, since there is no object by which to gauge it, but there is indubitably depth. Not so with darkness; since we may " peer " into darkness but never really penetrate it, this note of spatiality is rather paradoxical, but nonetheless quite definite.[5]

Even the most dense fog does not abolish visibility; we may at least see our own hand if we raise it to our eyes. Darkness too may be described as " dense "; but it would seem inappropriate to speak of a fog as " deep," whereas such a qualification fits well into the impression we get from darkness.

Darkness thus unites, in its phenomenal givenness, two apparently contradictory features: it is impenetrable and, at the same time, experienced as space-filling.

[5] The spatial character of darkness becomes particularly obvious when one hears a sound " coming out of darkness." One gets the impression of this sound being " behind " or in the darkness. These facts have been studied experimentally by W. Metzger, " Optische Untersuchungenam Ganzfeld," *Psychol. Forsch.*, 1929, XIII, 15. Cf. also Katz, *l. c.* p. 59. Similar impressions are to be obtained by a very small light suddenly appearing in complete darkness; it is somehow distant from the observer, although there is no means for appraising the distance.

The sense-datum of black presents another unique peculiarity. All other data of vision can be excluded from perceptive consciousness by the simple procedure of closing the eyes, or covering them so that no light enters even through the closed lids. Not so with black; there is no means to get rid of darkness. Whatever we do, we remain surrounded by black.

One may, perhaps, imagine things so vividly that they replace the black partially; all kinds of shapes may appear " in " the dark. But I think it hardly possible that any imagination should be vivid enough to create the impression that the darkness has disappeared. Generally, the imagined shapes will appear as in the darkness or placed before it.

The fact just mentioned might be used as an argument for the " purely subjective nature " of the sensum black. The absence of light, then, would appear as only an indispensable external condition for this subjective phenomenon to emerge. One might consider either that this subjective process is continuous and overlaid by those processes excited by light, so that it becomes totally unnoticeable, or that it is discontinuous, arising only in darkness, because it is inhibited by the light stimulus.

Both hypothetical explanations, however, are rather unsatisfactory. To prove the first, one would have to show that brightness, as perceived, diminishes more quickly than its physical counterpart. The continuous " black-process " would become more and more effective in sensory awareness the less energy impinges on the sense organ. Therefore, a weak light would overlie this process less effectively and appear as less bright than it objectively is.

The other hypothesis is not even accessible to objective testing. The first might be tested, although the results would be, probably, difficult to evaluate. So far as we know, there are no facts in favor of this hypothesis.[6]

[6] Thus, a consequence to be expected would be that the just-perceptible differences in brightness, measured in stimulus-magnitudes, would be larger with very weak lights. There is nothing pointing in this direction.

The most remarkable fact, of course, is that black or darkness is seen. This is, indeed, a simple fact which does not lend itself to any further analysis. When there is nothing to be seen, we do not see nothing, but see black. This fact is so evident that it has never been denied. For all its obviousness it is exceedingly difficult to explain. Insofar as it is seen, black is an "object" of sight or a part of the "universe of visibles." Our awareness of black has nothing to do with any consciousness we might have of a performance executed by our sense of sight. In fact, the "universe of visibles" is not to be defined as the totality of all objects of which we become aware by means of our eyes; rather the eye ought to be defined as that organ which renders us aware of the visibles.[7] I have pointed out elsewhere that we have no immediate knowledge of our eyes being "active" or affected in ordinary visual experience.[8] We become aware of our eyes participating in the process of visual awareness only in certain extraordinary situations, when exposed to strong glare or when making an effort to see better an indistinguishable object. Then, there is an "organ sensation" the like of which is absent under average conditions. Our certainty, however, about "seeing with the eyes" seems more the effect of experiences, such as observing the disappearance of things when we close our eyes.

This statement is confirmed by observations like that made on a girl who had been operated upon after having been blind. She did not realize that the new impressions came to her through the eyes, became aware of this only when she covered her eyes with her hands. The case was observed in the United States and is reported by M. v. Senden, *Raum- und Gestaltauffassung der Blinden*, Leipzig, 1929, p. 114.

[7] This is true in spite of the fact that the term "visible" seems to connote "visual performance." This connotation may be more the result of habit than of any immediate givenness. In this regard, it seems significant that in many languages the roots of the respective terms are widely different: eye—to see—to look—to gaze; *oculus—videre; Auge—sehen—schauen.*

[8] "Remarks on some Problems Concerning Sensation," *The Modern Schoolman,* 1945, XXII, 66; esp. p. 82 f.

Black appears to us definitely as an "object" of sight, a visible something. The experience presents to us a *res extra* in the same manner as any visual datum is presented; black pertains to the visible universe. We are aware, when there is—objectively or subjectively—complete blackness, that "it could not be any blacker," that is, we realize that this impression is the maximum of its kind. There are similar experiences in the field of sight and also of other senses. But the experience of black has certain features which make it unique.

Any impression of "medium intensity" carries with it the evident note that it might decrease as well as increase. A medium brightness is seen as possibly more or less bright. A weight may be more or less heavy than it is, a sound more or less loud and also higher or lower. This note refers not so much to a potentiality inherent in the object, the awareness of which is difficult to explain, as to an immediate knowledge concerning the place the impression holds within the order of its kind. In virtue of this note we realize that a certain weak sensation is "just noticeable." This is the subjective side of the "threshold" which usually is defined in terms of stimulus-magnitude. We need no extended series of experiments to know immediately that a certain impression cannot become weaker; any diminution would not be one of the sensation, since it would make the latter disappear. We express such experiences with the words: I can hardly see it, hardly hear it, I can "just feel" it, etc. These statements are not based on nor do they refer to the magnitude of the stimulus; they describe a characteristic of the subjective experience.

There is no asymptotic approach to a zero-value in sensory experience. A sensory impression either exists or is non-existent. The transition is not gradual, but one of sudden abruptness; out of the absence of sensation a positive datum suddenly emerges. In fact, the commonly used expression that something disappears gradually is incorrect; it becomes gradually less, but it disappears instantly.

An analogical consideration applies to the maximum of im-

pression. We need no further evidence to realize that a weight we lift is nearly "intolerable," in the literal sense of the term. The same may be said of any other sense impressions. The maximum is not only the sensation we can "just tolerate," it is an absolute maximum beyond which there is "nothing." A weight we cannot lift does not exist as a weight for us; it ceases to have weight and turns into an object conditioning a very different experience, namely that of insuperable resistance. The "hardly tolerable" is that which cannot increase but only become less. Increase, at this point, loses its meaning. Above a certain limit there is no increase but either sudden disappearance or persistence of the same impression.

All sensations of a kind arrange themselves in an order terminated by the just noticeable on one end and the just tolerable on the other. The place any intermediary degree of sensation holds between the two poles determines the particular "intensity." Very intense means close to the upper, very feeble means close to the lower, pole. Describing a sense impression by reference to this "scale" would probably do more justice to the facts than referring to an "intensive magnitude." However, we have also an impression of magnitude.

It is characteristic of every magnitude that is capable of either increase or decrease or of both. What lacks this note is, therefore, not a magnitude or an intensity in the correct usage of the term. But this is precisely the case with black. It can become neither blacker, nor less black, because it then ceases to exist. Our experience of black is one of a pure quality lacking any trace of intensity.[9]

[9] Black has been characterized as "a color produced by zero-stimulation, correlated with a non-light sensation which gives no degree of intensity." (G. M. Michaels, "Black: a Non-Light Sensation," *Psychol. Rev.*, 1925, XXXII, 248.) In this statement, only the last part is of interest here. The rather curious notions of "zero-stimulation" and of "non-light sensation" need not be examined.—One might argue, however, that black by "becoming less" does not actually disappear, as was claimed above, but stays on and only is mixed with white, remaining as an "element" of grey.

However, by such an assumption the state of the question is not altered. Black, to persist as an "element" must remain unchanged; grey is, from this angle, not

If " intensity " is considered an essential feature of all sensation, then black cannot be listed among the sensations; if, on the other hand, black is taken as a true sensation, then there is at least one sensation which lacks intensity.[10]

Why do all people speak of " seeing nothing " when surrounded by darkness, although in fact they see something, namely, the dark? It seems easy to say that one does not mean " nothing " but " no thing." [11] But one does not employ the same expression in regard to the appearance of the uniformly blue sky or any other expanded color. Here too, one does not " see a thing " ; nonetheless this experience is not described as " seeing nothing." Rather, one says that one sees " nothing but " blue or red, implying thus that one sees and sees " something," even though the visual datum does not deserve the name of a " thing." It is not even potentially a thing. But it is potentially something nevertheless; it is a potential " background," against which a thing may appear.[12] Black, on the contrary, is hardly a potential background; it must give place to a totally different kind of sense impression for anything to appear at all.

There is, so far as I can see, only one situation in which black—in the sense in which the term is understood here—

interpreted as a " lesser " black but as the same black whose pure impression is vitiated by the admixture of light; or, as it has been put, a " meeting " of black and light. (G. H. Rich, " Black and Grey in Visual Theory," *Amer. J. Psychol.*, 1926, XXXVII, 123.)

[10] The peculiarities of intensity or its absence in the case of black create a serious difficulty to those psychologists who maintain that intensity is a primary and necessary feature of sensation. They are forced to invent rather fanciful explanations. Thus G. E. Müller suggested that black has intensity but one which is not recognized because it never varies. However, we may look at white light and never notice any change and nonetheless realize perfectly the degree of brightness. G. E. Müller, " Zur Psychophysik der Gesichtsempfindungen," *Zeitschr. Psychol.*, 1896, X, 30; 1897, XIV, 40, 60.

[11] This interpretation is countenanced, of course, by linguistic habits. Nothing, *ne-rien* (i. e. *non rem*), *niente* are all built the same way.

[12] The relation of " figure and background " which contemporary psychology considers very important cannot be analyzed here. The fact referred to above indicates that this relation is of a wider significance than even the configurationist school realizes.

becomes somewhat of a background. This happens when we see a light in darkness, so weak or so far away and small that it does not dispel the darkness but is surrounded by it. As soon as the brightness becomes a little stronger or the light a little bigger, it will irradiate and suppress darkness. But one may doubt whether this experience represents a true analogy to the usual relation of "figure and background." A small quasi-punctiform light cannot be said to form a "figure," or to have any definite shape. Under average conditions, at least, black does not become a background nor does it impress us as potentially such one. This is, perhaps, very natural, since a situation in which we "see nothing" is not suggestive of another in which what hitherto was "nothing" would become a background of something and therewith itself also "something."

Every sensum, with the exception of black, holds a definite place in the order of its kind. Therefore, it is indicative of some possible change; a blue can always become darker or paler, take on a more reddish or a more greenish shade, and still impress us as blue. Not so with black. It is the only representative of its order, and by that fact is distinguished from all other visual impressions. The reference which every other sensum of sight has to some other member of the order of visibles in general and of its particular narrower order, is absent in black. Black not only lacks intensity; it also lacks this reference to other visibles.

Before drawing any conclusions from or formulating any questions on the basis of the peculiarities of black described above, another fact must be mentioned which seems to bring the mind into an even more direct contact with the Nought—paradoxical though such phrases are, they are unavoidable—also in the field of sight.

II

We pay, ordinarily, little attention to the fact that our visual field is limited. Or rather, we are not even conscious of this fact under average conditions. We know, of course, that to see what

is back of us we must turn around; we know that to follow a moving object we must, eventually, turn not only our eyes but our head and body too. This knowledge, however, is not "given" together with our visual experience as such. When we look straight ahead into the world, we see indeed but a certain part of all that is around us; this fact we know, but not as a datum of sight. In naive behavior there is no consciousness of the limits of the visual field.

What is outside of the visual field does not exist within the universe of visibles. If the eyes are focussed on one point, things emerge "out of nothing" when they enter the field, and leaving it disappear into nothingness. We may believe that they go on existing in an invisible world; but as long as our experience is restricted to the world visible under these conditions, we have no proof for this existence; "outside" of the field of vision there is strictly nothing, not only no thing, but nothing since we cannot have any certainty that there exists any thing or that there is even the mere possibility of existence. Thus, the visual field borders on the Nought; it is indeed a Nought, so to speak, *secundum quid*; but it is truly nothing insofar as the universe of visibles and our knowledge of it are concerned.

This "surrounding Nought," however, is not given in any way to our consciousness. Even though the Nought swallowing up all things which pass beyond the limits of the visual field forms the boundary of this field, we never realize, in immediate experience, that this is so. How could sight render us aware of what by principle can never become an object of sight? [13]

[13] One might argue that the phenomenon under discussion is simply the effect of the rapid decrease of visual acuity towards the periphery of the retina. The farther away from the center of the retina the image is projected, the less clear it becomes. In the most peripheral regions no clarity can be attained on shape, size, or color. One knows that something is there, one cannot distinguish what it is. This objection can be dealt with by referring to the fact that "being there" is still equivalent to "visual existence" and fundamentally different from non-existence. Here too there is no gradual transition. But another interesting observation can be appealed to as a weighty argument against the objection. In cases of hemianopsia the visual field is cut in two, one half of it becoming totally ex-

It would seem that the limitation of the visual field is an essential feature of the visible world. But limited though this world is, we have no immediate visual awareness of the fact. We are, so to speak, in touch with the Nought, and do not know about it. It is somehow a factor determining the visual world, and nevertheless does not enter into it.[14]

Visual experience, then, never makes us face the Nought. Black is definitely not nothing. It only conceals things so effectively that they disappear. We see, as was remarked before, not nothing, but indeed no thing. It is for this reason that darkness frightens. The frightening quality lies not in the black itself but in the things which, unexpectedly, may come out of darkness. There may be danger lurking " behind " the dark, and this danger is unknown. The response to the apprehension of an unknown danger is dread. This state is so intolerable that any known danger is preferable. The imagination of the fearful wanderer populates the dark with all kinds of shapes, robbers and ghosts. They are indeed products of

tinguished. The border of the visual field, then, falls on retinal regions which are capable of distinct object-perception. The behavior of things is nonetheless the same. They are there, and suddenly disappear, without the border of the visual field becoming a conscious datum. Particular problems are raised by those defects of the visual field which do not comprise border regions but create " holes " in the middle of the field. These defects are known as " scotomata "; notwithstanding this name, derived from the Greek word for darkness, they need not appear as black spots. They may even pass unnoticed. The study of these defects is of great interest to the general psychology of vision, although they have not, apparently, attracted enough attention, for no detailed descriptive study seems to exist of the manner in which they are experienced. However, a discussion of these things, though in a way pertinent to the present problems, would lead too far afield and therefore must be omitted here. Cf. E. Tschermak, " Licht- und Farbensinn," *Bethe's Hbd. d. Physiol*, vol. XII, 1. Berlin, 1929, p. 298.

[14] For the sake of completeness, mention ought to be made of the " blind spot," that is, the part of the background in the eye where there are no retinal elements and where the nervous fibres, forming the optic nerve, break through the wall of the eyeball. Usually we are not aware of the corresponding defect of the visual field. It is a physiological scotoma. The pertinent facts and theories cannot be discussed here, for the same reasons as given before. Cf. E. Tschermak, " Uber Merklichkeit und Unmerklichkeit des blinden Fleckes," *Ergebn. d. Physiol.*, 1925, XXIV, 330, and J. Bróns, *The Blind Spot of Mariotte, Its Ordinary Imperceptibility and Filling in and Its Facultative Visibility*, London, 1939.

fear and tend to increase uneasiness. But they are also the creations of a sort of defense-mechanism, because they have the appearance of concrete things and so diminish the intolerable sentiment of dread arising from the vague, but powerful, impression of an unknown danger.

The dread which people experience in complete darkness, like any other form of dread, is not the effect of the Nought, as Heidegger claims. The annihilation which threatens man in the clutches of dread is not envisioned as "coming from" the Nought. The latter is much more the *terminus ad quem* than the one *a quo* of the "movement" towards the Nought.[15] Darkness is the veil behind which hides the terror; darkness itself is no thing, but it is not nothing either.

The black we see is a being. It owes this characteristic not only to our knowledge of black as a surface color. The latter mode of appearance is very different from the space-filling quality of darkness. Surface colors have no depth; our look does not penetrate into them. It seems paradoxical to express it this way, but is not incorrect to say that the black of surrounding darkness is more substantial than that of black as a surface color; the latter belongs to the object of which it is the color; the former exists in itself, independently of all object. However, this quasi-substantiality does not endow darkness with the note of thingness. Darkness, therefore, lacks an essential feature of reality as we know it, and at the same time is indubitably as real as any other "object" of sensory awareness. It appears as pertaining, simultaneously, to being and non-being. But, then, how can such an impression arise? Pertaining to two kinds, being an intermediary between them, seems to presuppose that both are possible contents of experience. But the Nought cannot be experienced.

The experience, then, which we are inclined to consider as one placing us in face of the Nought is not such as actually to

[15] H. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, Halle a. S., 1927, passim, esp. p. 184 ff.; *Was ist Metaphysik?* Bonn 1929. Cf. my article "The Cognitive Aspect of Emotions," *The Thomist*, 1942, IV, 582.

achieve what we believe it to do. On the other hand, the one point within visual experience where the Nought emerges, if one may say so, at the border of our experience remains unknown and unremarked. When we believe we approximate the Nought we stay within the boundaries of positive givenness; where we approach the Nought in virtue of objective conditions, we remain ignorant of it. Whether or not these facts have any further relevance for the metaphysical question concerning the Nought remains to be seen.

III

It may be, as has been pointed out by L. Wood, that our ideas on sensory experience suffer from our habitually starting with sight and taking this sense as representative for all the other senses.[16] But sight has certain peculiarities of its own which are not found or to which no analogy is found in the other fields of sensory experience. The " sensation " of black, for instance, seems to have no counterpart in the data furnished by the other senses, unless one may look at silence as an experience akin somehow to that of darkness.

Silence is defined as the absence of every auditory impression. It is more easily realized than complete blackness. Subjective auditory phenomena are absent in more persons than is the case with subjective photismata. There is no such difficulty as having to determine whether one has to do with true and perfect black or a minimum of albedo, a very dark grey. But silence seems to be of different kinds. Even though its objective counterpart is the absence of any stimulation, from within or from without, silence takes on a different character or significance according to the total setting. But not only the significance varies; it would seem as if the very nature of silence were not the same under all conditions.

Complete silence which lasts a long time, surrounding us as

[16] L. Wood, *The Analysis of Knowledge*, Princeton, 1941. Cf. also my article on sensation, quoted above, note 8.

it were from all sides, creates different impressions than silence which sets in suddenly. The momentary interruption of a continuous sound or noise which presumably will start again is different from a sudden silence interrupting a noise and not " pointing " at continuation. Thus the pause in a musical score is a " significant " pause, whereas the sudden ceasing of noise in an industrial plant, as caused, for example, by unexpected shutting off of the current, is not significant (unless it be made so by previous understanding, as when it indicates the end of the working period). A pause is significant by its " prospective " character; it refers to something to follow. It is not the task of this study to list the varieties of silence or to describe their characteristic differences. But it seems necessary that the existence of such varieties be mentioned. The further discussion will be concerned exclusively with lasting " deep " silence, as we may experience it in the " dead of the night," or also, in the laboratory, when being placed in a " soundproof " cell.

Only one trait of the suddenly beginning silence needs to be considered. When a loud noise suddenly stops, silence may " hit " one as if it were a positive impression. There is a note strongly reminiscent of " impact " although there is no actual or conceivable force impinging on us. Under such conditions one also becomes clearly aware that silence is a datum of our sense of hearing; one might use the same paradoxical name for it which some have employed when speaking of the " sensation " of black, namely, that silence is a " zero-sensation " in the auditory field. It also shares with the experience of black the absence and even impossibility of degree or intensity. The moment even the slightest noise is heard, there is no longer any silence. Silence is or is not, but it is never more or less. If such expressions are sometimes used, they belong to the many incorrect phrases common in popular language.

It seems to me that this " being hit " by silence and also the way silence impresses us when it is " deep " and lasting has something of the positive nature inherent in the awareness of darkness. Perfect and uninterrupted silence has a definitely disquieting power. This is felt even in full daylight, but much

more when silence is combined with darkness. Lasting and complete silence seems painful and a portent of dreadful events, just as darkness does. Here too, it is not silence as such which gives rise to a state of dread, but that which may, unexpectedly and unpredictably, suddenly emerge out of the silence.

Subjective auditory phenomena (acoasmata), if there are such, do not truly interrupt or eliminate silence; they are heard "against a background" of silence, much as the subjective photismata are seen against a background of darkness.

Notwithstanding these similarities, it is probably correct that we "see" black in another sense or a truer sense than we "hear" silence.[17] But there are other relations between the

[17] The phenomenon of silence seems to have attracted little attention on the part of the psychologists. There are but few references to the problem in the literature of the last twenty years. But the problem deserves investigation, were it only because of the existence of "significant" silence. Neifeld in "Theory of the Black Sensation," *Psychol. Rev.* 1924, XXXI, 498 (also: C. Ladd-Franklin, *Color and Color Theories*, 2d ed., New York, 1929, p. 241), says that "the fact that black is correlated with a non-stimulated condition of the retina can be almost paralleled by the case of silence in hearing. Silence is not yet a definite sensation, but if consciousness found it necessary . . . such a sensation would undoubtedly develop." Were the relations of sound to space as important as those of visual data, "we might well have developed a 'silence sensation' to take the place of nothingness." Although such speculation seems rather idle, it is noteworthy that this author recognizes the quasi-sensational character of silence and refers to such expressions as "silence is felt." The same expression is, however, used by E. B. Titchener as an argument against the idea that silence is an auditory analogy to black. While this author defends the character of sensation for black against Ward, he says that silence is not "heard" but "felt." He does not explain what he means by this term. The experience of silence may, indeed, condition some feeling-state, but it cannot be apprehended by such a state. (E. B. Titchener, "A Note on the Sensation of Black," *Jour. Phil., Psychol. a. Sc. Meth.*, 1915, XIII, 113.) Recently, H. Werner, *Grundfragen der Intensitätspsychologie*, Leipzig, 1922 (Erg. Bd. X, *Zschr. f. Psychol.*), p. 5, has stressed the "positive character of silence." Cf. also E. Strauss, *Vom Sinn der Sinne*, Berlin 1932, p. 113.

The auditory character of silence can be demonstrated by a very simple experiment. An observer is placed in a perfectly silent room. To his left is an arrangement allowing the production of a just audible, in any case a very weak, continuous noise. This noise is heard as coming from the left. At the same time, he has the definite impression that right of him there is silence, even that from there silence "comes to his ear," or that it "reaches" him. The realization of a difference in the impressions received by the two ears is marked. It could not be if silence did not belong in the class of "audibles."

two. They reinforce one another. Silence is more impressive and dreadful in darkness, darkness more so when combined with silence. (" Whistling in the dark.") Therefore, the terror of darkness is lifted by the sound of a human voice, and silence becomes less dreadful when one is able to distinguish some things.

Darkness and silence are more tolerable in company than in solitude. But there is also a " contagiousness " of dread, and people may tremble in darkness and silence when they sit close together, holding one another's hands. Silence may be so deep that not even human voices are able to " drown " it; quite to the contrary, it is as if the silence would swallow up the voices, so that man finally ceases to talk and surrenders to the engulfing power of silence.

" Silence before the storm "; this phrase does not describe, perhaps, a common occurrence. But it exists; and it appears as meaningful, one would like to think, in virtue of a vague knowledge that out of silence, as of dark, all kinds of unknown terrors might emerge. If such a silence is, by some signs, recognized as preceding the storm, it is particularly impressive because it accentuates a note always felt to be present in silence; this accentuation results from the foreknowledge of the storm.[18]

IV

There is a general agreement that black is an experience of a definite sensory character. There is less agreement concerning silence, although I believe that the reasons for listing silence among the phenomena of the " audible universe " are strong enough to warrant calling silence, too, a sensation or a " quasi sensation." But in both cases the use of the term appears curiously inappropriate and the underlying conception rather self-contradictory.

How, indeed, can we sense or perceive anything where there

[18] Concerning the positive nature of darkness and silence one may also refer to the fact that these phenomena act as signals in the behavior of animals which leave their lairs only when all is quiet or dark.

is nothing? It is of little use to speak of black as a "zero-sensation" or in any similar manner. The very name of a zero-sensation is self-contradictory.

Sensory awareness arises when a stimulus impinges on the sense organ, when there is some sort of affection of the organ, or when—to speak the language of the School—the sense is actualized in a process which, or the effect of which, is generally known as the *species sensibilis impressa*. This conception is fundamental in the Scholastic theory of sensory awareness and, therefore, not in need either of any further explanation or of numerous references. One quotation will suffice: "The actual sensible is the sense in act . . . neither is sight actually seeing, nor is the visible actually seen unless when sight becomes informed by a visible *species*, so that out of sight and the visible is formed a unity." [19] The *species sensibilis* may be interpreted as the totality of all inner changes, bodily and mental, which arise as consequences of an adequate stimulation of the sense organ.[20]

It seems evident that in our "seeing" black the sense is *in actu*; if this is true there must be not only a *sensibile in actu*—the black we see—but also a *species* actualizing the sense. How such a *species* can be assumed in the case of black appears to be a very difficult question.[20a]

[19] *Contra Gentiles*, I, c. 51: . . . sensibile in actu est sensus in actu . . . neque visus est videns in actu, neque visible videtur actu, nisi cum visus informatur visibili specie, ut sic ex visu et visibili fiat unum. Cf. *Q. D. de Ver.* q. 1, a. 4, c. Cf. also John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Philosophicus*, ed. B. Reiser, Turin, 1937, vol. III, p. 170 ff. (Phil. nat. IV, q. 6, 1.)

[20] *Q. D. de Ver.*, q. 2, a. 2, c.: . . . colores actu visibiles per lumen solis. An interesting elaboration and an attempt to correlate this theory with the data of physics known in his time may be found in Suarez, *De Anima*, III, c. 15, no. 4. Cf. also T. Ledvina, *A Philosophy and Psychology of Sensation*, Washington, D.C., 1941.

[20a] It should be recognized that the phenomenon of black creates serious difficulties for most theories of sensory awareness. It is not only Scholasticism which here encounters definite problems. Every philosophy assuming any influence coming from "without" finds itself in a similar situation. Kantian Idealism considers some kind of "affection" resulting from an unknown and unknowable relation between the mind (or the sense) and the "thing in itself"; the "chaos of sensa-

Black, however, though definitely sensed as *extra*, lacks many of the properties other data of sight possess. It is not a *res extra*. It has no intensity. It entails no reference to other data of its kind. It suggests no possibility of another visible, hardly even in the sense of becoming a possible background. It is, so to speak, the minimum of visual datum which exists and, one would like to add, can exist.

It has been reported above that many students of sense physiology and psychology, anxious to find some bodily process underlying the awareness of black, have referred to a hypothetical endogenous cortical process. The nervous cells located in the visual area of the brain are believed to be in a continuous state of activity, the result of which is the " subjective grey." In the light of this hypothesis black appears as a purely subjective phenomenon, in fact at first sight not different from a hallucination. In virtue of a peculiarity of our organization we believe we see, while in truth there is no activity on the part of the sense organ. It has to be admitted that this hypothesis is quite plausible particularly since there are no means to put it to any kind of test; it cannot be " verified." [21]

tion," shaped into perception by the " forms of intuition," is the primary origin of our sensory awareness. It is difficult to see how any such chaotic datum may originate in absence of any power, unless one were to credit the absolute Nought with such an ability (an idea which hardly finds place within the system of Kant, although it may be fitted into the philosophy of Heidegger). A philosophy which refuses to recognize the fundamental dichotomy of subject and object and looks at both as inseparable elements of a " total situation " encounters the same difficulties, since it would seem that in complete darkness no such situation exists; one term of the relation has disappeared. One might go on analyzing other philosophies and the result would, obviously, be much the same. It appeared necessary to point this out, if only in passing, so as to render ineffective the easy argument that the whole problem arises only within Scholasticism and is one of the many allegedly superfluous " subtleties " in which this particular philosophy becomes involved.

[21] Not even the recording of electrical changes in the brain (electroencephalography) can supply such a verification. Suppose one were able to discover such waves, to attribute them with reasonable certainty to the visual cortex, to make all imaginable determinations, how can one ever prove that these electric phenomena are the correlate of our seeing black? Whether the cortical process goes on and is only overlaid by electric changes dependent on stimulation of the eye, or whether it is stopped under these conditions, it is never possible to establish any

A question which is perhaps not a wise one to ask, but which involuntarily imposes itself is: what could be the possible biological significance of this sensation of black? So far as I can discover, there is none at all. Not seeing at all would have exactly the same result in the organism. This is plainly evidenced by the experiences in other sensory fields. In the tactual-kinaesthetic field we have no datum corresponding to that of black. We have definite experiences, for instance, of holding and handling an object; but, if our hand is inactive and does not receive any impression at all, we have no experience of "nothingness." As has been said above, such experiences are, apparently, the prerogative of the two "higher" senses.

Since there can be no question of a *species sensibilis impressa* where there is no energy inpinging on the sense, we are apparently thrown back on the hypothesis of a cortical origin of the awareness of black. One cannot fail to see that this explanation, if accepted, still leaves many questions unanswered and is by no means free of quite serious difficulties.

First, there is the question why such a cortical process should exist only in the case of the sense of sight, or if it does exist in other cortical areas too, why it conditions a "physiological hallucination" only in this one instance.[22] The awareness of

strict relation. If such a cortical process exists, it may well be nothing more than the manifestation of the continuous readiness of the centers to function; after all, such continuous waves are observed in the brain also without any reference to a particular experience or behavior.

[22] In truth, the use of the term "hallucination" ought to be avoided in regard to the awareness of black. It is true that hallucination is usually "explained" as the effect of an abnormal activity of certain cortical areas. But this idea rests on the assumption that hallucinations are, in their appearance, like percepts and therefore taken by the patient as realities. However, it is very questionable whether this assumption is correct. Hallucinations occur only when mental processes are seriously impaired. Either there is a state of mental confusion and an obscuration of consciousness, as in delirium, or a general weakening of mental power, as in chronic alcoholic hallucinosis, or a very profound alteration of the whole personality, as in schizophrenia. Furthermore, there is ample evidence showing that the hallucination is indeed taken by the mentally diseased person as reality, but does not appear as a true "copy" of real things. What the patient actually "sees" is frequently a mere fragment, or some datum which he *interprets* as reality.

darkness retains, even when viewed in such a manner, its uniqueness.

Secondly, the mere phenomenal appearance of this subjective datum presents several puzzling features. It is the same with all people. It is reality in one sense and its opposite, namely nothing, in another. It is the appearance of a datum the like of which visual experience does not contain. Even if there were no perfect black, the difficulties referred to above would still exist. Why should such a cortical process condition the impression of black? Why not of light? One might understand if the latter were the case; the repeated stimulation of the visual apparatus might start a process which goes on, even if there is no renewal of stimulation. But the datum of darkness corresponds to the absence of all stimulation.

If we abandon for the present the problem of our " seeing black " and turn to the phenomenon of silence, the situation becomes somewhat less complicated.

In the experience of silence we become aware of a sensum which possesses less of reality, so to speak, than black has. However much of a true sense experience silence may be, it is less a " sense-object " than black. The mere fact that the naive mind, without any misgivings, lists black among the " colors," but does not view silence in a corresponding manner, is evidence of this difference. Nonetheless, silence too retains some of the characteristics of auditory impressions. It is " there " outside of us, something of which we become aware, it may even " come from " a certain side (see above note 17). Even more than black it can be described as a " minimum sensation."

Whether because of its peculiar " intangibility " or because of another characteristic, silence seems to possess less of stability than darkness. The eye looking into the dark sees no thing, but nevertheless " something "; the ear listening to silence hears nothing. In fact, it seems correct to describe this " hearing of silence " as a " hearing into silence." We strain our ears more to catch, if possible, the slightest sound than we exert our eyes to discover a light in darkness. The latter represents in some way a " fulfillment," however unsatisfactory, of our

desire to see. Silence leaves the desire to hear utterly unsatisfied.

If one considers this fact (which, I think, is easily ascertained), one is reminded of a particular notion in Scholastic psychology, or even philosophy. Everything is ordained towards its end, as a representative of its species or as an individual. It has a "natural longing" for this end.[23] Every process is directed towards a goal to which it is correlated and which is appropriate to the process. This is particularly true of all forces manifesting themselves on a supra-material level. It can easily be shown that the notion under discussion becomes more meaningful the higher we mount in the "hierarchy of being." It would lead us too far afield to follow this line of thought further. But it is very obvious that such a natural longing not only exists but also becomes conscious in the human mind concerning the exercise of its powers.[24]

There is no doubt that the proper exercise of any power brings about a particular kind of enjoyment. Not only "exercise" in the usual restricted sense, but all adequate performance, is accompanied by a note of satisfaction, independently even of the achievement. What psychology calls the "pleasure of function" exists not only in the playing child, or in the healthy man who enjoys a brisk walk, or in a person who feels gratified in doing something he knows how to do well. There is such a pleasure in all adequate functioning. A person who has been confined in darkness because of an eye trouble rejoices not only because his health or his working capacity has been restored; he feels a definite gladness in being allowed to see again, simply to make an appropriate use of his eyes again. The illustrations might be multiplied, but I do not think that there is a particular need for doing so.

[23] One may admit that this notion of *amor naturalis* has sometimes been misused or misinterpreted. One may reject the idea that the behavior of falling bodies is determined by their possessing such a natural desire for the *locus naturalis* but nonetheless recognize the significance of the notion.

[24] For the present discussion it is irrelevant whether or not the existence of powers or "faculties" be recognized. Even the greatest enemy of this notion admits that the "function" of seeing is different from that of hearing or that of reasoning. Cf. my article "Functions, Factors, and Faculties," *The Thomist*, 1944, VII, 323.

It is not only the desire to retain or renew contact with reality nor only the wish to overcome the uncanniness of silence which makes man " strain his ears " so as not to miss the slightest sound which might eventuate. It is the natural desire of the power for its proper operation. It seems to me that silence is not so much a correlate of a specific auditive performance as it would have to be were it a sensory datum in the strict meaning of the term; rather it seems that silence is the experience of " nonfulfillment " of this natural desire.[25]

This admittedly tentative explanation seems to enable us to understand somehow the nature and the peculiarities of silence. It does not, however, bring us much closer to a solution of the problem of black.

Black too is, as remarked above, in a certain sense a " minimum sensation." It lacks many of the properties the other sensa of sight possess. Particularly, it possesses even less of " thingness " than the other space-filling and expanded colors. And it has no intensity, since—to say this once more—something existing in only one degree of intensity and forbidding even the mere idea of an increase or decrease does not have any intensity. Whatever the operation of sight be in the case of black, it must be an exceedingly simple one, reduced to the least possible minimum of sense function.

But one can apparently hardly conceive of the mere nonfulfillment of the natural desire giving birth to an experience

[25] Under ordinary conditions we are not aware of this desire, though frequently of the pleasure caused by its being fulfilled. Desires as such become manifest and experienced contents of consciousness only when their fulfillment or satisfaction encounters an obstacle. It is also only under such conditions, as Heidegger has shrewdly observed, that we realize the " at-handedness " of the things we customarily use without much thinking of them. This at-handedness of the " implement " (which seems the best translation of Heidegger's term *Zeug*: *Schreibzeug*, an implement for writing, *Werkzeug*, an implement for working, etc.) obtrudes, as Heidegger says, in the " mode of deficiency." It might be noted, in passing, that the presence of this natural inclination is the factual basis of the, for the rest utterly fantastic, idea of Freudian psychoanalysis, which credits the objects of all faculties with being " loaded " with a definite amount of " libidinous " energy. T. Grenier, *Le Choix*, Paris 1941, seems to come close to our notion where he writes that " le néant est le signe d'une exigence de la nature humaine."

so much like an "impression" as happens when we "see" black. We do "peer" into darkness, but not to fulfill the desire of the power; we are, in a way, satisfied that we actually "see." Our desire to discern more, to recognize some definite thing, however vaguely, arises on a higher level; it is not immediately correlated to mere functioning, but to the need of an object. Black is, indeed, "objective," according to our immediate consciousness, but it is not an "object," since it lacks any trace of "thingness." Because we see no thing, we are anxious to get hold of such one. Darkness is not an abolition of visual sensing, as silence is in regard to hearing, but of visual cognition.

It is, perhaps, to the point that one reconsider the similarities and dissimilarities between darkness and silence. To do so, it may be best to start with a brief comparison of the various "universes" presented to us by the senses of sight, hearing and tactual-kinaesthetic experience. It may be true that the ultimate foundation of our knowledge about "thingness" is to be sought in the realm of kinaesthesia. By handling an object (by "comprehending" or *begreifen*) we realize its boundaries, its self-enclosedness, so to speak. But kinaesthesia is a rather inadequate means for grasping the relations of one thing with others; this sense rather makes us acquainted with individual things in isolation. The relations obtaining among things are much more efficiently envisioned by one look than by the succession of kinaesthetic impressions more or less laboriously synthesized into a pattern of things. The universe of visibles is an articulated, patterned, arranged universe of which the order is apparent and directly given. The universe of audibles forms a strange contrast; it is primarily devoid of all thingness. It resembles in that respect the complex of data furnished by the "lower" senses, in that by hearing we become cognizant not of things but of some of their effects or properties. This universe is mostly, at least in its chief aspect, one of "meanings" much more than one of things.[26]

[26] It would be an interesting problem to study how far the characteristics of these universes influence human life, and in what manner various features of

Because of these characteristics (the description is, I realize, very incomplete and sketchy, but may suffice here) there exists "significant" silence, as in the pause (in speech or music), but there is no similarly significant darkness. Suppose that our visible surrounding should suddenly disappear for a short time in darkness; we would feel this as an unpleasant, fortuitous, and utterly meaningless interruption. If however, *per impossible*, the visible universe should disappear for a brief moment altogether, we would not even notice this as an interruption because the absolute nothingness is no object of experience.

We cannot become aware, by means of the sense of sight, of the invisible or the Nought as negation of the visible; this has been evidenced by our incapacity to realize directly the existence of the boundaries of the visual field. The absence of visibles must, to be noticeable at all, be itself a datum of visibility. One might, perhaps, claim that by this reasoning it becomes clear why there is (one feels tempted to say there must be) black or darkness, but we still do not understand how it can be. The riddle of a sensory awareness without a stimulus, or an impressed *species*, remains unsolved.[27]

experience depend on such fundamental differences of the universe. For instance, there is the fact that the "frame" is meaningful only in the universe of visibles; there is no analogy to it in the audible world and hardly one in the realm of kinaesthesia. Television, therefore, will never attain, however perfected, the same power to replace reality as broadcasting or recording; the impression one receives of a symphony heard over the radio may be exactly the same as he would have when listening to the actual performance without looking at the orchestra. But even the best motion picture has somehow less reality than the voices of the actors or the music. What we see remains a "picture," so to speak a second-rate reality, whereas the sounds are "real." There are more of such facts which deserve a closer examination than has been accorded to them. One cannot but feel that our capacity to make use of things and forces has developed more than our acquaintance with them.

[27] One cannot well appeal to the *species insensata* of the later Schoolmen, by which they thought to explain the apprehension of the goodness and badness of things by means of the faculty called *vis aestimativa* in animals, *vis cogitativa* in man. First, nothing is explained by introducing the term *species insensata*; secondly, the influence of these hypothetical *species insensatae* is bound to the presence and effectiveness of *species sensatae*, that is *impressae*. The former, whatever they be, must be "founded" on the latter.

To return once more to the notion of a continuous cortical process which would produce noticeable effects only when it is not overlaid or suppressed by the effects of external stimuli: if one were to accept this hypothesis, one would have to make further hypothetical assumptions. Since black is apparently not conditioned by any affection of the sense by an external agent,[28] it is hard to understand how such a " sensation " of so utterly different a character develops. One might suppose that the cortical process is actualized by the first stimulation of the sense. Then, one would have to assume that a person born blind, but with an intact visual cortex, would not see black but not at all (i. e. see, a witty man once remarked, as we do back of our head). Whether he does or not seems to be unknown.[29]

One question remains unanswered by even the most ingenious hypothesis: why is it only the sense of sight in which we encounter the phenomenon of this so-called " zero-sensation "?

If the hypothesis of the cortical process were based on solid evidence, one might submit that something like a *species impressa* might also come " from within," if some actualization

[28] A remarkable observation seems to indicate that black may act as a true stimulus. If an absolute black hole is presented in a white field for two or three seconds, one gets a white after-image even when the black field extends to 35° 50′, which corresponds to a retinal image of about one inch in diameter. Under these conditions, since the after-image appears within 12 seconds, there is no possibility of a retinal process excited by the white field having spread to the center. Thus it would seem that the black image on the retina releases some process of which the after effects then become visible. (R. S. Creed, with a mathematical appendix by J. H. C. Thompson, " The after-image of black," *Journ. Physiol.*, 1931, 73, 247.) If we do not observe this after-effect when passing from darkness to light, the reason is that the image, being white, cannot be seen in light.

[29] So far as I could find out, there is no evidence available on this point. The examinations, in cases of persons born blind and operated on in later years, are highly incomplete and unsatisfactory. Nobody seems to have thought of asking such a person whether in his previous life he had any experience resembling any of those he has now, after having acquired vision. There are many other questions, of great interest too, which ought to have been asked and never were. In view of this defectiveness of such testimonies one really wonders at the far-reaching conclusions, e. g., concerning visual space perception, that psychologists feel entitled to draw from such poor evidence.

" from without " had taken place. But it seems hopeless to build any further interpretations on a foundation of so little solidity.

Before continuing the attempts at finding a solution, a further aspect of the experience of black must be mentioned which, at first sight, not only increases the difficulties but adds a new one pertaining to a quite different context. Colors, including black, are accidents. They have no existence independently of the things of which they are the color. This something need not in all instances become itself perceptible. In the case of the space-filling colors, it is the medium which is colored, though it is not always directly perceptible. Looking into water, where there is no bottom or any other solid boundary to be seen, we see only space-filling green, but in fact we see the color of water. The same holds of expanded colors. The red we see through the closed lids is not seen as belonging to anything; but it is actually the color of the blood, or of the tissues forming the lid in which the blood circulates.[30] But black? Of what thing could black be the color, of what substance an accident?

If the empty space were something, one might try to claim that black is the color of this empty space or of the void. Then, one might go on to say that the *species impressa*, in this particular case, is not an alteration residing in the retinal cells or those parts of the visual apparatus which are affected by light, but in those whose functioning is related to the awareness of space. It is known that in this awareness factors enter which are not optical, for instance, the data furnished by the inner and outer muscles of the eye. It would, perhaps, not matter that these factors as such seem to have no relation to " color " perception; distance is, after all, a simple visual datum, not allowing for further analysis, and nonetheless dependent on a sum of heterogeneous physiological and psychological factors.

But space is no thing of reality; it is viewed as an *ens rationis*

[30] It is not so easy to explain the blue of the sky. It is indeed the color of the air with its inevitable impurities seen against the darkness of the cosmic space beyond. Here one is confronted by the same difficulty concerning black: that which is not determines the color of that which is.

cum fundamento in re; it is not easy to understand even how the definite note of spatiality observable in darkness can creep in, since there is nothing to supply the *fundamentum*. So, we apparently encounter in black the only instance of an accident having, so to speak, achieved independence. This, however, is a metaphysical impossibility.

This difficulty cannot be met by reference to the " hallucinatory " character of the impression of darkness. No hallucination or any other subjective process can endow an accident with substantiality or render it able to appear independently of a substance in which it exists.

In the face of all these difficulties one is seriously tempted to doubt the absolute reliability of the statements that science, even in its most primitive stages, makes in regard to darkness. Perhaps it is not true that in darkness there is a total absence of all stimulation. May there not be forces acting on the organism of which the methods of scientific observation cannot take account? The argument that our seeing light and colors depends on the impact of light-energy on the eye is not quite convincing, because black holds such an exceptional position in the " universe of visibles " that it also might have a totally different origin. This is admittedly a highly hypothetical suggestion, and one which should not be taken up before all other ways to arrive at an understanding of the phenomenon under discussion have been tried.

One feature found in the experience of darkness seems to allow for an interpretation on the same lines as that submitted above for silence. This is the curious " spatiality " and " penetrability " darkness possesses (if it did not have this property, one could not " peer into " it). It is space which has no real depth, it is a medium into which our look penetrates without getting anywhere. It is the mere consciousness of the need sight has of seeing; and seeing means primarily seeing things in space.

If the cortical process which has been mentioned repeatedly before actually existed, there would be no need for a *species*

sensibilis in each single instance of an awareness of black. The origin of the sensible quality corresponding in our experience to this process, however, remains as mysterious as ever. The difficulties related to this fact have been enumerated above.

The subjective phenomenon consists not only in our seeing black as a visual datum, but also in seeing it detached from any substratum. One might argue against this objection that in truth there is such a substratum (not as one really existent, but as apparent in the phenomenon as given). Darkness may, it would seem, be considered as "space-filling"; the mind cannot apprehend the void; whenever there is space given to the mind, it is space filled by something, even though this filling "material" is not always immediately apprehensible by the senses. The distance which separates us, under ordinary conditions, from an object is not empty; it is filled by a medium which we usually ignore, or perhaps cannot see at all, but of the presence of which we are nevertheless perfectly sure. The less transparent such a medium is, the more it becomes visible. Darkness is the absolute minimum of transparence; its presence, therefore, is indicative of a medium. (Hence, perhaps, the expression "dense" darkness and similar terms referring to space filling.) This interpretation appears sufficiently plausible to eliminate the difficulty arising from the nature of an accident without substratum, since some kind of substratum seems to be actually apprehended.

The theory of Ladd-Franklin and every similar hypothesis assuming a continuous cortical process has been severely criticized by G. E. Müller. His arguments deserve fullest consideration, and they seem hard to refute. First of all, he points out that it is impossible to conceive of this process coexisting with even the weakest sensation of white, as would have to be the case in the awareness of any grey. Secondly, black behaves in regard to contrast and after-image exactly as do colored lights or white.[31]

[31] G. E. Müller, "Uber die von Ladd-Franklin augestellte Theorie der Farbenempfindungen," *Zeitschr. f. Sinnesphysiol.*, 1929, LX, 71; see also the older study

The observation, furthermore, reported in note 28 gives rise to another serious objection to the theory of "subjective grey" or of any continuous cortical process corresponding to the awareness of black. According to these experiments black acts as a true positive stimulus, producing a negative after-image which appears as white or light against a neutral background. The cortical process, therefore, is interrupted or overlain by another without any positive agent bringing about this change. Still more difficult to explain is the fact that such a light-colored after-image appears also in darkness when the eyes are closed. Under these conditions there is not even the possibility of claiming an influence of the new stimulus stemming from the neutral background. Thus it seems that the whole hypothesis assuming such a continuous cortical process rests on a very weak foundation.[32]

The hypothesis which makes out of the awareness of black a purely subjective phenomenon encounters, as was seen, such great difficulties that it is better abandoned altogether. It does not accord either with the principles of physiology or the observed facts of visual perception. But then we are thrown back into all the puzzles from which this hypothesis was supposed to deliver us.

The positive quality of black as well as other facts, like those of contrast and after-images, seem to force us to assume that black is a stimulus. But, on the other hand, it cannot be one since darkness consists, from the viewpoint of physics, in the absence of all light. A hypothesis offering a chance of satisfactory interpretation must, therefore, find ways and means to attribute a stimulus property to the physical circumstances obtaining when we see black. Obviously, this stimulus cannot

which G. Révesz carried out under Müller's direction: "Über die Abhängigkeit der Farbenschwellen von der achromatischen Erregung," *ibid.* 1907, XLI, 1.

[32] It should be noted that the theory discussed above was proposed, in principle, in 1884 by W. v. Volkmann: "Black is a sensation and not the mere negation of sensation; it is . . . that sensation which corresponds to the state of the nervous fibre when undisturbed by external stimuli." W. Volkmann v. Volkmar, *Lehrbuch der Psychologie*, Cöthen, 1884, vol. I, p. 334.

be one of light. But it might still be one of "light energy," namely in a form which does not condition the awareness of any spectral color or white or grey.

I suggest that the human eye behaves, in darkness, like a photographic film sensitive to infra-red rays. The eye is not sensitive enough to respond to the differences in intensity of this radiation, but has the capacity of responding by a vague and indetermined stimulation the conscious correlate of which is the awareness of black.

With this assumption all the difficulties would fall away. There would be a stimulus, therefore a definite process going on in the eye, with all the possibilities of bringing about the phenomena of contrast and of after-image. There would be also, consequently, a *species impressa.*

As it is stated here this hypothesis is, of course, much in need of additional elaboration. The questions of the awareness of grey, of the relation of the response to infra-red in the presence of luminous rays, and others must be answered. I submit that for the present these details are of minor importance and that a discussion thereof would be too long and necessitate entering into too many little facts of sense-physiology. It seems to me, however, that all these questions may be answered in a satisfactory manner.

The greatest objection to the hypothesis suggested here is based on the black allegedly seen by persons who have lost the sense of sight because of destructive processes in the retina of the eye, or the nervous pathways of the optic nerve and its cerebral continuations, or the cortical centers where the excitations of the retinal cell finally end. In regard to the last-named cases it may be mentioned that not all patients afflicted with cortical blindness realize this fact; there are curious observations on people, blind because of cortical defects, who are unaware of their blindness. It is hardly possible to decide, since appropriate studies are missing, whether this unawareness of blindness depends on an impairment of mental capacity or on the peculiar nature of the lesion. If, on the other hand, a person

after having lost his sense of sight by a lesion of the brain cortex still " sees " black, an explanation seems to be at hand, if one were permitted to assume that the stimulation by the infra-red rays did not reach exactly the same parts of the cortex. But, for the present, this is admittedly a highly hypothetical notion.

All the questions concerning an explanation of these phenomena can be answered only when one knows exactly what the " sight " of the blind actually is. I have remarked above that we have no reliable information of what the blind person " sees." The phrase " perpetual night " may be not more than a phrase, or it may apply only to a certain kind of blindness.

As long as the necessary data are not available, any explanation is purely hypothetical.

There is another point on which some remarks may be made, that which refers to the substratum of the black seen in darkness. As long as black is viewed as one " color " among others, it seems as if one would see, in darkness, an accident without anything to support it. If we assume, however, that the seen black corresponds to an undifferentiated response on the part of the sense organ to infra-red, this problem, too, finds its solution.

The infra-red rays are sent out by the objects which are invisible in darkness. This emission of rays is different in the different objects, but these differences pass unnoticed, because in the hypothesis submitted it is assumed that the eye responds to the infra-red with one experience only, without any degree of articulation. Even when we stand in an open space where there are no objects in our immediate neighborhood, the infra-red rays come from somewhere. They are reflected from the soil, they are emitted by things far away, the clouds of an overcast sky may be their source. Thus, this difficulty too seems to meet its answer.

Of course, there are still questions. We need not worry about the fact that there is no similarity between infra-red radiation and black. Neither is there between light waves and colors.

But the features described before, the "depth" and "spatiality" of darkness, the "peering into it," are not so easily explained. However, we may recall that darkness holds no unique position in this regard. Any space-filling color presents similar properties. I have referred before to the impression one receives when looking into water when there is no object or bottom to be seen. Here too we see nothing but space filled by a certain color. The nature of the medium itself is not apprehended. If one places a thick square container before an evenly illuminated surface, e. g., of opaque glass, and fills the container with a colored fluid, one also sees not a colored medium but a colored space, into which one may peer without seeing any thing.

It may be that the hypothesis submitted here encounters objections of which I am not aware. But the mere fact that such a hypothesis may be constructed and takes account of the problems mentioned before, shows that it is possible to reconcile the phenomenal data of sensory awareness with the principles of Scholastic psychology and, generally speaking, with the theory of our awareness of the outer world.

V

The experiences of darkness and silence are the only ones in which the mind gets close, by way of experience, as it were, to the Nought. If we still "see" black, it is so minute a datum that it approximates nothing; this is even more pronounced in the case of silence. Both these experiences have, therefore, been used at all times as metaphorical references to the Nought.

It is a quite remarkable fact that the human mind apparently feels the need to talk about the Nought. The absolute nothing, it would seem, is in no way a suitable subject for predication. The argument that all the speculations on the Nought are nothing but the result of a grammatical fallacy seems not very convincing. It has been said that the problem of the Nought (and, incidentally, also that of Being) is nothing else than the confusion of the copula as denoting existence with the same

syntactical element denoting attribution; the " is " as such has no meaning. Either it relates a thing with the experience of our encountering it, or with another property. A thing is real, or green; it never simply " is." The mere fact that one can connect nouns and predicates by means of the copula does not endow the latter with any proper meaning. It is, therefore, grammatically correct to say that " the Nought is, e. g., devoid of all properties," but it does not make sense.

It is, on the other hand, not easy to conceive of so many clever minds having been deceived in such a manner. One should not be so sure of one's own superiority, or of the enormous progress mankind has made, which has recently reached a hitherto unattained height, as to forget about the greatness of the past and cease to harbor respect and admiration for the ideas of bygone ages. It is true that mankind proceeds by " trial and error "; but the trial is a worthy endeavor, and the error a fruitful achievement. Particularly in regard to the fundamental questions of human existence such a respect for the past is well indicated. Here, science, the main carrier of " progress," fails us; surely science is concerned only with that which is (and this only in one respect), but never with that which is not. If the problem of the *nihil* has been of concern to several of our predecessors, it is probably one worthy of consideration.[33]

Among the authors who discussed the question of the Nought, St. Anselm deserves notice. His remarks in the *Monologium* are quoted approvingly by St. Thomas.[34] The most explicit

[33] The fallacy of " reification " may have been the mistake of Fredegisius, but hardly of any other writer. Fredegisius, indeed, *Littera de nihilo et de tenebris, P. L.*, V, 750 ff., argues that the *nihil* must be something, else one could not talk about it. He identifies darkness with the Nought, and quotes the Scriptures to prove that the latter is something; e. g. *Ps.* CIV: misit tenebras—" si non sunt quomodo mittuntur? " (*Ibid.*, 745); *Matt.* VI: ipsae tenebrae quantae erunt . . . " quantitas de subjecto praedicatur . . . colligitur tenebras non solum esse sed etiam corporales esse."

[34] *Q. d. de Pot.* 2, 3, a. 1, ad 7um: cum dicitur aliquid fieri ex nihilo, duplex est sensus, ut patet per Anselmum in suo Monologio. The reference is to c. 5 and 8. For a more detailed discussion of Anselm's philosophy, see R. Allers, *Anselm von*

statement, however, is not found in this work but in a letter in which St. Anselm answers certain questions of "his beloved brother and son Mauritius." The topic is that of evil, whether or not it be something. Anselm starts with the notion that *nihil* is a name and therefore means something, whereas the Nought is nothing. There is no difference of meaning in the two terms "nought" (*nihil*) and "not anything" (*non aliquid*); the latter term excludes every being from thought and cannot, when uttered, posit any thing. But exclusion cannot be signified otherwise than by means of naming the thing to be excluded. Therefore, the word "not anything" must signify something by the very fact that it destroys everything. It signifies in the mode of destruction. The word accordingly does not signify the Nought in the way of positing it; it is only quasi-significative.[35]

There is a remarkable similarity between the argumentation of St. Anselm and the views proposed by Henri Bergson, although the latter, probably, had no knowledge of his predecessor. Bergson's reasoning, however, culminates in a denial of the meaningfulness of the problem.[36] The question why there should be anything at all rather than nothing appears to the French philosopher as a pseudo-problem of a purely verbal origin. When we think of anything as non-existent, he says, we start by thinking of it as existent, and then proceed to think of another reality incompatible with the first. It is,

Canterbury, Leben, Lehre, Werke, Vienna, 1936. On Aquinas' views cf. M. C. O'Brien, *The Antecedents of Being*, Washington, D.C., 1939.

[35] *Epist.* II, 8; *P. L.* CLVIII, 1155. I have summarized this little-known treatise—the letter indeed is more an *opusculum* than an ordinary letter—not only because of its intrinsic interest, but also because of the striking resemblance to Anselm's and Bergson's arguments. But the former does not conclude that the whole question is not more than a "pseudo-problem." This passage in Anselm's works, and several others besides, also show how thoroughly mistaken Heidegger is in his interpretation of medieval metaphysics and the notions concerning the Nought (*Was ist Metaphysik?*, Bonn, 1929, p. 25). I have commented on this mistake (*loc. cit.*, p. 611). Since then, I have discovered that much the same criticism of Heidegger has been voiced by A. Faust, *Der Möglichkeitsgedanke*, Vol. II, *Christliche Philosophie*, Heidelberg, 1932, p. 156 f., footnote.

[36] H. Bergson, "*L'idée du néant*," *Rev. Philos.*, 1906, LXII, 449.

however, not necessary that this second reality be thought of explicitly; it is sufficient that it expels the first.[37] The similarity of this view with the " thought in mode of destruction " of St. Anselm is apparent.

By a series of affirmations we arrive, Bergson goes on, at the idea of the totality of being. It seems that we likewise, by a series of negations, arrive at the idea of the Nought. But Bergson denies that such a parallelism can be asserted. Affirmation is, according to him, " a complete act," capable of resulting in the establishment of an idea; but negation is only one half of an act the second half of which is implied or postponed.[38]

We cannot think the Nought, Bergson claims, because we cannot delete ourselves, who are realities. While the latter fact is indubitably true, the reasoning seems fallacious. It is a matter of course that we cannot eliminate ourselves as those who think. But the question is whether this fact is relevant to the question. It is not. To be capable of thinking of the Nought it is not necessary that every being be actually destroyed Obviously there can be no thought when there is no thinker. Neither can we " think " in the full sense of the word the totality of being; to do so we would have to comprise actually within our mind all that is and thus have an infinite intellect. Both, the totality of being and the Nought, can be thought apparently only by way of " prolongation " or " extrapolation."

One cannot help suspecting that in Bergson's reasoning there is a certain confusion of " thinking " and " imagining." We cannot, indeed, imagine our non-existence. Nonetheless, this thought is free from any self-contradictoriness. We know ourselves to be contingent beings, whose existence is in no way

[37] *Loc. cit.*, p. 456: " Penser l'objet A inexistant, c'est penser l'objet d'abord et par conséquent le penser existant; s'est ensuite penser qu'une autre réalité, avec laquelle il est incompatible, le supplante. Seulement, il est inutil que nous nous représentions explicitement cette dernière réalité . . . il nous suffit de savoir qu'elle chasse l'objet A."

[38] *Loc. cit.*, p. 457: ". . . si l'affirmation est un acte complêt de l'ésprit qui peut aboutir à constituer une idée, la négation n'est jamais que la moitié d'un acte intélléctuel dont on sous-entend ou plutôt dont on remêt à un avenir indeterminé l'autre moitié.

necessary and therefore may cease or return into non-existence. Thus, we may—in abstract reasoning—quite well include our own being within the totality of being which is thought of as abolished.

Bergson might have submitted another argument which, at first sight, might appear more convincing. If negation of being consists in expulsion of the reality of which one thinks first by another reality, then the Nought cannot be thought of, since there cannot possibly be another reality expelling the one which *per definitionem* includes all being. But, whereas it is unquestionably true that in thinking by way of negation we start with an affirmation or position, it is questionable whether the further procedure consists in fact in the mind's turning towards " another reality incompatible with the first."

The void is not the Nought; but neither must it be conceived as being " filled " by something (e. g., the ether). When Democritus stated that " there is nothing but the atoms and the void," he did not conceive of the latter as filled by anything, since the alternative does not allow for any such " filling." The notion of the void is not absurd, nor in itself contradictory. But what " other reality " can there be in the void to " expel " the reality, e. g., of the atoms? When we imagine the void, we probably think of some space between real things, some dark and silent space; the image is not of the void but of the bodies between which it extends. The image, however, is inadequate to the concept we have in mind.

Observation does not confirm the description Bergson gives of the mental process of negation. There is often no trace even of an " implicit " other reality, least of all of any such " incompatible " with the first. This description refers, apparently, mainly to the negation of properties where such incompatibility indeed may be encountered. Or it refers to the process of logical negation, on the basis of the principle of contradiction. It may also be that the conditions obtaining in regard to the denial either of particular properties to a particular thing (or a multitude of such things) or of the truth of a particular proposition

are not the same as those which obtain in the case of either affirmation or negation of the totality of being.

Any negation of something particular leaves the possibility of removing to somewhere. Either the subject moves away, to some other place, standpoint, or whatever it be, or the denied fact, property, state of affairs, is removed because denying it in one regard amounts to the possibility of affirming it in another. When I say that this thing is not red, the statement implies that another thing is or might be. When I say that a thing is not here, I imply that it is elsewhere (it cannot "have vanished into thin air," and even then there would be "thin air"). To speak of the Nought, provided such propositions are meaningful, is indeed a negation, but one in some way different from all others which remain within the realm of being.

A proposition dealing with the Nought is a (negative) judgment of existence. It does not deny the existence of this or that particular thing, but it states that there is no thing at all. Therefore, there is no possibility of turning from one thing to another or one truth to another. All truths are ultimately about something; but the truth of a proposition having as its subject the Nought is not about anything.

The answer given by St. Anselm is ingenious; but it leaves open the question of the nature of the "mode of destruction." Because of this and other obscurities some thinkers have conceived of the Nought as a "limit notion" (*Grenzbegriff*). This idea implies that its meaning cannot be fully conceived but only, as it were, approached. But this notion, too, is anything but simple.[39]

[39] The notion of "limit" as employed advantageously in mathematics falls outside of the considerations of this article, which is concerned with reality and its opposite. There are allegedly relations between the logical or mathematical problem and that of ontology. Witness thereof are, e.g., the remarks of W. Moog ("Einheit und Zahl," *Kant Stud.*, 1919, XXIII, 302) who is led by his speculations on mathematical concepts to a statement reading (*loc. cit.* p. 309): ". . . das Nichts ist die absolute Grenze des Etwas, die Grenze, die als solche zum Etwas gehört und zu seiner Bestimmung nötig ist, dann aber auch von dem Etwas als ein Anderes unterschieden werden muss, weil es sonst nicht Grenze sein könnte."

In ordinary experience, a limit is a boundary, that is, its idea springs from two distinct things contiguous to one another, present simultaneously in a sensory field and mutually determining their outlines. The two things must be presented to one sense, since to speak of a color bordering on a softness is meaningless. Furthermore, it should be noted that the experience of limitation or bordering pertains primarily to the senses of vision and touch (that is, kinaesthesia combined with tactual impressions). If one can use the expression at all in regard to audible data, it is only by way of metaphorical analogy; however, the analogy is so faint that it is hardly ever employed. One does not, usually, speak of a noise bordering on silence. There is, however, a corresponding phenomenon in the field of hearing, namely " transition " and " end." As another thing begins at the boundary of a first, so a voice takes up where another ends; as there is a " passing " from red to green when we look first at the rose and then at the leaves, so we " pass " from C to G major, or to silence from noise. Both these phenomena, bordering on limitation on one hand, and transition or ending on the other, have something in common, so that it is possible to say, poetically, for instance, that life is surrounded by death (*media in vita in morte sumus*). But in all these instances there are two beings, two realities. It seems nonsense to state that something borders on nothing or the Nought.

In fact, the notion of a limit applies in first line not to the Nought but to the " unattainable " which to reveal this property must first be somehow known. There are two kinds of unattainables: one can be " approximated," even if it is never reached and remains " infinite task "; here one may speak, using a term borrowed from geometry, of an " asymptotic " approach. The other is eternally beyond, envisioned somehow, never to be approximated.

Kant refers to this difference in a well-known passage where he distinguishes between " barriers " (*Schranken*) and " boundaries " (or limits, *Grenzen*).[40] " In mathematics," he writes,

[40] *Prolegomena*, etc., No. 57, " Beschluss von den Grenzbestimmungen der reinen Vernunft," *Works*, ed. E. Cassirer, Berlin, 1922, vol. IV, p. 104 ff.

"and science, human reason recognizes indeed barriers but no boundaries, that is, it recognizes that there is something outside itself whereto it never can attain, but not that it will somehow reach an end in its own inner progress. The widening of knowledge in mathematics . . . progresses into infinitude . . . Nonetheless one cannot fail to recognize barriers here, since mathematics deals only with phenomena, and everything which never can become an object of sensory intuition, as the notions of metaphysics and ethics, lies outside of its (mathematics') sphere . . . But metaphysics leads to boundaries." [41] A few pages later, Kant speaks of the notion of "boundary" as a "symbol." [42]

The discovery of the "boundaries" determining the field of mathematics and science, however, is not the achievement of these disciplines themselves. As long as mathematics is just that and does not pass beyond its legitimate field, it may encounter "barriers" but it cannot know about "boundaries." The latter become apparent only when the attempt is made to apply the methods of mathematics to non-mathematical problems. In other words, the boundaries of mathematics are discovered by metaphysics. (Therefore, it is never the task nor the right of the scientist to make any statement on the universal applicability of his methods; the judgment on this matter must come from an "outsider," one who views mathematics or science from another viewpoint than that proper to these disciplines. The presumption that scientific methods are applicable everywhere presupposes, in fact, that first the right of metaphysics be denied. Scientism does not arrive at but starts from a rejection of metaphysics.)

In regard, however, to its own boundaries metaphysics, or reason, is the only judge. It not only decides on the incompatibility of some special procedures with other than their proper objects, it also reaches the point where it comes to make a state-

[41] *Loc. cit.*, pp. 106-108.
[42] *Ibid.*, p. 115.

ment on its own boundaries. But how can reason pronounce on things " beyond reason "? [43]

Kant's followers, particularly the Neo-Kantians, were preoccupied more with determining the boundaries of reason than with the problem of what constitutes these boundaries. Their predominant interest was chiefly epistemological; but the question of the significance of the notion " beyond reason " pertains to metaphysics. It is, therefore, only in recent times, in consequence of a revival of truly metaphysical interest, that the problem of the boundaries, and therewith also of the Nought, came to the fore. This happened on one hand with the so-called " philosophy of existence," mainly with that of M. Heidegger [44] and with the renewal of ontology in the works of N. Hartmann.[45]

Hartmann neither dismisses propositions of metaphysical intent as " meaningless," after the manner of the positivists, nor denies to the mind the right to inquire into and expect answers about the " object of knowledge " and of reality. He admits that there is, beyond the intelligible, the realm of the " transintelligible " which, however, must possess a " minimum of intelligibility." If it did not, it could not even be discovered in the mode of a boundary.

Thus, the notion of boundary or limit appears as that of a legitimate boundary, namely, of a line, so to speak, dividing two realms, though one of them can be just envisioned, never entered, grasped only as the beyond, never made an object of knowledge. The transintelligible is, on one hand, that which is simply given and cannot be justified in its existence and essence

[43] The " suprarational " truths of Revelation are not to be considered in this context. They are indeed " beyond " reason, but they are not discovered by reason. Only the boundaries of which reason somehow becomes aware in its own performances and in face of its own problems are the subject to be treated.

[44] See above note 34.

[45] Hartmann's works of interest in this context are first, his *Metaphysik der Erkenntnis*, 2d ed. Leipzig-Berlin, 1925, and, second, the two volumes *Zur Grundlegung der Ontologie*, Berlin, 1938, and *Möglichkeit und Wirklichkeit*, Berlin, 1938. Unfortunately, these works have not been translated. For an interesting evaluation of Hartmann's ideas see J. Collins, " Neo-scholastic critique of Nicolai Hartmann," *Phil. a. Phenomen. Res.*, 1945, VI, 109.

by reason. It is, on the other hand, the intimate nature of being, the *an sich*, of which we may or may not have an adequate knowledge; in any case we have no means of ascertaining the final and complete adequacy of our knowledge. But the totality of being seems to " border " also on the Nought. And the Nought can hardly be viewed as possessing a " minimum of intelligibility." It lacks any property whatsoever, therefore also that of intelligibility.

When the mind tries to " deal with " the Nought—if such an expression be permissible—it finds itself in a peculiar situation. The particular is unattainable to reason; it is given to the senses. However incapable the intellect may be of " handling " the particular, there is at least the knowledge of presence. When the intellect tries to penetrate into the innermost nature of being, it meets boundaries not to be passed, but the *an sich* is there, present, though veiled and mysterious. But the Nought is never there, never present; it is only anticipated. It never faces us—indeed it cannot, being nothing—but something in our *experience* suggests that it might face us. The peculiar manner in which the Nought is encountered is that of the " not yet." Or, one may look at this situation from the other side, so to speak, and describe it as the awareness of the fact that what is " still " is. Which is tantamount to saying that there is an element of insecurity and uncertainty in our very knowledge of the things that are, including our own being.

We never encounter the Nought, but only its " eventuality." This is true also of the experience in which we " come closest " to the Nought, the experience of dread.[46] The living experience of the " imminent Nought " must not be confused with the attempt to conceive of the Nought. On the other hand, an emotional state cannot arise unless there be some kind of cognition preceding the emotion. In emotion itself we know

[46] Perhaps it would be correct to say that the Nought is " encountered " in the state of dread as imminent, but that it is not realized and becomes a problem only afterwards in the reflection on the state of dread and its significance. On this question cf. my article on " The Cognitive Aspect of Emotions," *The Thomist*, 1942, IV, 582.

only of the particular modification of our own being as conditioned by the situation and its "value-aspect." That which releases the emotional response is not known by means of the emotion.[47]

If the Nought is apprehended as "imminent" it is not apprehended as present. Some other object must be apprehended to release the state of dread. Or one might say that there must be given something "in which" the imminent Nought can be apprehended, whatever this apprehension or its significance may be. It is known that M. Heidegger believes in a direct apprehension of the Nought in dread, and this Nought is conceived by him as an active power. "It is the Nought which annihilates." I have pointed out elsewhere[48] that this idea rests on an incomplete and faulty analysis of the state of dread and of the situation in which a person experiencing dread finds himself. The annihilating power is not the Nought but some

[47] The idea that anything, whether in its aspect of reality or of value, is apprehended by means of "emotional acts" seems to me untenable and contrary to facts. I can, therefore, neither accept the arguments proposed by W. M. Urban, (*Valuation*, New York, 1909) nor the theory of M. Scheler that we apprehend values by a peculiar act of *Erfühlen* (*Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik*, Halle a. S., 1914), nor that of A. v. Meinong who believes that emotions "present" to the mind values ("Uber emotionale Praesentation," *Sitz. Ber. Wien. Akad. d. Wiss.*, 1917), nor finally N. Hartmann's claim that it is by emotional experiences that we become cognizant of certain sides of reality (*Zur Grundlegung der Ontologie*, Berlin-Leipzig, 1935, p. 177 ff.: "Emotional transzendente Akte"). A cognition of reality and its value aspect must be given in order for an emotion to develop. Emotions tell us only about ourselves. Therein may be sought also the reason why the word "to feel" is used for emotions and for bodily states (I feel cold, I feel sad). The modifications of the self, in turn, are apprehended as determined by the total situation in which the person finds himself and become therefore a source of knowledge in subsequent reflection.

The relation, as stated above, of cognition and emotion is not only observable; it is also a necessary consequence of the Scholastic theory concerning the *passiones animae*. The latter are said to be correlated to and manifestations of the movements of the sensory appetites. These are moved by some kind of knowledge about objects. The principle *nil volitum quin praecognitum* applies in fact to all forms of appetition, not only to those of the rational appetite.

[48] In an essay on the metaphysics of dread, published in the volumes *Krankheit und Seelenleben*, edited by the *Katholische Akademikerverband*, in 1931, and lately in the article quoted above, note 44.

very real, although unknown and unknowable, overwhelming force, in comparison with which the person's very being appears to be so close to nothingness, *prope nihil*, that his very existence becomes highly questionable. It would be perfectly true if one were to say that in dread the last foundations of individual being or existence are undermined and ready to crumble.

It would seem that here definite analogies become visible between the experience just named and those of darkness and silence. In fact, the latter two have always been related to the Nought. There is no need for any pertinent quotation, since there are a great number of them at hand, in poetry, in common language, and also in the writings of the mystics. Darkness and silence have been called above "minimum sensations." They are not minima in the sense that a "just perceptible" sensum, a light or a sound (on the "threshold") may be called a minimum. The object in such a case is a minimum; but the act of sensing is as complete as when we see a bright light or hear a loud sound. Darkness, however, and silence allow the sensory faculty only a minimum of operation; in the case of silence not even that, since—as I tried to explain—this experience corresponds to the non-fulfillment of the natural inclination of the faculty for its proper operation.

It is possible to imagine a state of affairs in which we would not even "hear" silence or "see" black; where we would truly see nothing and hear nothing, not even be able to try to see (by "peering" into the dark) or to hear (by "straining our ears"). Such conditions exist indeed; they exist for sight beyond the boundaries of the visual field, they exist for the other senses whenever there is no concrete sensum presented to them. But the boundaries of the visual field are "invisible"; and the absence of sensations, e. g., of touch or kinaesthesia, is simply no datum at all. If we had no impression of nothingness, like black and silence, we would have no empirical knowledge that there might "be" the Nought.

Mention has been made above incidentally of the fact of the "just perceptible," the experience which corresponds to the

"threshold" on the side of stimulus magnitude. This experience is described as one which connotes that it can only grow but not become less, because else it would cease to exist. Here too, there is something akin to an "approximation to the Nought." This experience entails a reference to non-existence. It is an immediate and concrete indication of the fundamental fact "that things may be or also not be," therefore of their essential contingency. A thing which disappears, because it is destroyed, or vanishes from our sight, does not become nothing. The vanishing thing is supposed to go on existing outside of the field of our awareness; the thing destroyed either leaves tangible remnants or at least changes into something different. Even before chemistry or any other scientific investigation furnished the proof thereof, man was convinced of the "indestructibility of matter." When matter is said to be destroyed in modern physics it does not turn into nothing but is transformed into energy. But the inner experience of the vanishing sensation is the one by which we actually become acquainted with total disappearance, with existence turning into non-existence. But here too we know only of the "imminence" of such a change; we apprehend the future non-existence, but never the Nought itself. Here too the mode of givenness is that of the "not yet"; a minimum intensity of sensation, the just perceptible is that which is no longer a "not yet"; it is *prope nihil*.

Thus, the Nought becomes, in a sense, more than a mere "limit-notion," it is a "limit experience." To the conceptual Nought, the negation of all being, corresponds analogically the series of experiences in sensory awareness described earlier.

One may go one step farther and claim that some implication of the Nought is found in any form of "passing." Although no thing passes actually out of existence, it may undergo change, take on different properties and lose others, and be subjected to substantial change and become another. The inconstancy of things has often, in the history of human thought, been the reason for denying their true "beingness." From the school of

Elea onwards, this idea has been in the foreground of sceptical and of idealistic speculation, and also of those philosophies which made change or movement the very nature of being; the whole Heraclitian trend in metaphysics from the times of the old Ephesian up to Hegel stands under the impression that nothing is what it is or seems to be. In the definition that change is the transition from non-being to being account is taken of this reference to the Nought in the phenomenon of change.

There is, it seems permissible to say, a reference to or an indication of the Nought in various experiences which seem to let us "envision" the Nought somehow in their "prolongation." It sounds paradoxical, but nevertheless corresponds rather to the actual experience, to describe it by the words: If this particular process or change goes on, I shall encounter the Nought. However, this encounter never takes place.

Such a "prolongation" or "extrapolation" apparently justifies the introduction of the notion of a "limit." But it is very necessary to realize that notions which are legitimate in one field cannot be transferred into another without careful examination of the right to do so. Expressions like those of prolongation and extrapolation are taken from immediate experience and from mathematics; the notion of limit has its definite significance and place, particularly in mathematics, where the idea of a concept defining an "operation" also applies, without any inconvenience; even if the particular operation cannot be carried out in practice. The Nought (or zero) in mathematics is not the same idea as when the term refers to reality. And so also, the notions of "approximation," "prolongation," "extrapolation," and perhaps others of similar meaning cannot be transposed into reality unless the legitimacy of such a procedure be previously ascertained.

The limit in the mathematical sense has a definite meaning and can, therefore, be used in divers operations. But the limit referring to reality, be it the unknowable and transintelligible, be it the actual infinite, or be it the Nought, stands to the

things or events within reality, those inside, so to speak, of the limit, in a relation different from that obtaining between the mathematical magnitudes and limits. One does not leave the field of mathematics when "passing over" to the limit; but one steps into a different kind of reality, or even passes beyond the boundaries of reality, when using the limit-notions in reference to it. The mathematical limit is, however unattainable, still magnitude; it may only be approximated, it may be indicative of an operation never to be carried out perfectly, it may be surpassing any power of imagination; but it does not cease to belong to the world of mathematics and to obey somehow its laws. But the transintelligible lacks the essential feature of being as it is accessible to the mind; it is, *per definitionem*, no longer intelligible. Nor is the Nought in the same sense a limit, as zero is one in mathematics (or, for that matter, the point, etc. in geometry.[49] There is no operation of the mind, occupied with reality and being, which would lead by simple extrapolation or prolongation to the Nought. Once the Nought is mentioned, the realm of being is left behind altogether. Because of these circumstances it appears rather questionable whether one is entitled to apply the notion of "limit" to our awareness of reality, and accordingly also, whether the introduction of this notion may prove helpful in regard to the problem of the Nought.

It might, however, be argued that the Nought is not to be sought in the "prolongation" of being and as its "limit," but rather in the prolongation of non-being as it is encountered within average experience. We meet non-being in the shape of the not here and of the not so. All the things which do not occupy the place held by one definite thing, all the events not happening at the moment when another event happens are not here, and to this extent the one thing present or the one event occurring is indeed the "negation" of all these others which, in turn, are the negation of the former. A thing is not

[49] One of Schelling's followers, I think it was Steffens, spoke of the sphere as "the Nought expanded into every direction" (das allseits ausgedehnte Nichts).

so in regard to all the properties it does not possess; and those it has negate the others and vice versa. Therefore: *omnis determinatio est negatio, omnis negatio determinatio*.[50]

Neither the not-here nor the not-so is a *nihil absolutum*; but they seem to be indicative of it. If this thing is not here, and another also is not, and so forth, one apparently arrives at the idea of no thing being here or anywhere. If a thing lacks such and such properties and another thing lacks those the first has, one arrives at the notion of the absence of all properties. But the absence of all things and of all properties is what we mean by the term of the Nought.

But to look at the Nought as the totality of all negation is just what Bergson thinks to be the fundamental mistake. However, his argument does not appear to be valid; why it is not, I have tried to show above. The question is rather this: admittedly we never attain the Nought, as a thinkable object,

[50] The relation between affirmation and negation referred to above is an ontological proposition. It does not state anything about the psychological processes involved when we affirm or deny. The remark of C. H. Griffith ("Affirmation and Negation," *Amer. Jour. Psychol.*, 1922, XXXIII, 84) is therefore not to the point. He claims that the statement is not true, "from the standpoint of psychological and neurological processes involved." He reaches this conclusion by experiments which show that it is easier to cancel groups of letters containing certain letters than others not containing them, and that the reaction time to positive instructions is shorter than that to negative instructions; also, correctness in multiplication is more quickly ascertained than faultiness. The observations reported are surely correct. But logical identity or ontological reference and the psychology of corresponding operations are two different things. As A. W. Wolters has pointed out, the two judgments: "S is not P" and "It is false that S is P" are equivalent, but rest on different mental operations ("The Process of Negation," *Brit. Jour. Psychol.*, 1916, VIII, 183). If one looks at negation as a "mode of destruction," in the sense of St. Anselm, or defines it, with G. E. Spaulding (*The New Rationalism*, New York, 1918, p. 138) as the "positive fact of exclusion," or considers it, as Husserl does (*Ideen zu einer reinen Phaenomenologie und phaenomenologischen Philosophie*, Halle, a. S., 1913, p. 218), a "modification of some position," one has always to do with a more complex process than that of simple awareness and affirmation. Similar views on negation may be found in many authors. Cf. e.g., R. Demos, "A Discussion of a Certain Type of Negative Propositions," *Mind*, 1917, XXVI, 188; R. M. Eaton, *Symbolism and Truth*, Cambridge, 1925, p. 203; G. Bonaldini, *Saggio di una metafisica dell'esperienza* (Publ. Univ. Cattol. Sc. Fil. XXVII), Milan, 1939, p. 209.

because we are unable to conceive of it; but we approximate it; we may take away more and more things, negate more and more properties, and conceive of this process going on indefinitely; finally it would have to end, theoretically, by attaining the Nought. It does not attain it, it only envisions it somehow as the " limit " of the whole series. But what meaning can " envisioning " have in this connection? [51]

Obviously, " envisioning " cannot be taken here as indicative of an act of imagination. Whenever we perceive or imagine, there must be some thing towards which the mental act turns.[52]

" *Nothing, the pure Nought*; it is simple equality, perfect emptiness, lack of determination and content; undifferentiated in itself. In so far as intuition or thought can be mentioned here, it is considered a difference whether something or *nothing* is intuited or thought. To intuit or to think nothing is, therefore, a meaningful proposition; the two are distinguished, and thus the Nought *is* (exists) in our intuition or thought itself; and the same empty intuiting or thinking as the pure Being. Nought is, therefore, the same determination, or rather indetermination, and thus the same thing that pure *Being* is." [53]

[51] Argument taken from observations on abnormal mental states is always questionable. No doubt many have gone too far in using this material. Also, it is not so easy to make sure of the real significance of the statements made by mentally abnormal persons. However, one might refer to the troubles described by French psychiatrists under the name of *délire de négation*, and also to what is called " depersonalization." If we could rely on the descriptions furnished by the patients, we would have to assume that they have a direct experience of non-being; but the case histories usually do not impress the reader as giving a full and penetrating phenomenological analysis. Therefore, I prefer to discard these arguments.

[52] " There are negative objects. The absence, the gap, the void, the lack of color, of beauty . . . we never see such objects, nor can imagination grasp them." H. Ritzel, " Über analytische Urteile," *Jahrb. f. Philos.*, 1916, III, 252. These " negative objects " are objects only of judgments, not of sensory awareness. But they are, at least those mentioned by Ritzel, still far from the Nought. The gap is between things, the absence is noticeable within a certain set of things or a situation, and so forth. All this falls under the heading of *nihil privativum*.

[53] G. F. W. Hegel, *Logik*, Ges. Werke, Berlin, 1833, vol. III, p. 78. " *Nichts, das reine Nichts*; es ist einfache Gleichheit mit sich selbst, vollkommene Leerheit, Bestimmungs- und Inhaltslosigkeit; Ununterschiedenheit in ihm selbst. Insoferne Anschauen oder Denken hier erwähnt werden kann, so gilt es als Unterschied, ob

To realize the meaning of this passage one has to consider that " Being " does not mean, in this context, either the *esse existentiae* or the *esse essentiae*; it means an *esse simpliciter*, undifferentiated, as it were, the mere " empty " copula. This copula is interpreted as indicative of the mere possibility or capacity of intuition or reason to operate on an object should such one be presented to the mind. To this extent, indeed, it seems justified to say that Being and Nought are the same, since both terms refer to the mere capacity, the one, so to speak, in anticipation of an object presented, the other in anticipation of non-fulfillment. I think that one renders correctly Hegel's thought—though not in terms he might have chosen—if one says " thinking nothing " is equivalent to a readiness to think something, which thinking, however, " envisions " failure.[54]

This is, I think, what Hegel means by his statement that the Nought exists in empty intuiting or thinking. One might go one step farther and claim that the Nought not only exists but consists in this same emptiness of the mind. It is not an " object," which obviously it cannot be, but it is the preparedness for an object, destined, however, to be disappointed.

In this interpretation is implied a further consequence. In

etwas oder *Nichts* angeschaut oder gedacht wird. Nichts anschauen oder denken hat also Bedeutung; beide werden unterschieden, so *ist* (existirt) Nichts in unserem Anschauen und Denken selbst; und dasselbe leere Anschauen oder Denken, als das reine Seyn. Nichts ist somit dieselbe Bestimmung oder vielmehr Bestimmungslosigkeit und dadurch überhaupt dasselbe was das reine *Seyn* ist."

[54] It would be unjust to discuss ideas on the Nought without mentioning, at least in passing, one author who not only has devoted some effort to the clarification of the problem, but to some extent may be considered a precursor of Hegelian " dialectics." This is Charles de Bouëlles, Carolus Bovillus, who in his *Dialogi tres de animae immortalitate, de resurrectione, de mundi excidio et illius instauratione*, Lugduni, 1552, speaks of the *nihil* being *caligo et negatio*, and his treatise *De nihilo*, Paris, 1510 (the work is in the Public Library in New York) refers to the Nought as the " least fruitful in being, but the most fruitful in thinking," explaining that thought progresses by negation. There is not much literature on Bovillus. The most detailed study I know is that by Jos. Dippel, *Versuch einer systematischen Darstellung der Philosophie des Carolus Bovillus*, Würzburg, 1865.

the " emptiness " of intuition or reason there is an indication of man's mental powers being not self-sufficient; they depend for fulfillment on an objective world not their own or of their own creation. It is not necessary here to inquire whether or not such a consequence would fit into the system of Hegelian metaphysics. We may use his analysis without committing ourselves to the acceptance of his further doctrines. But if the interpretation suggested above appears acceptable, it furnishes a possibility of relating the experiences of darkness and silence on one hand and the Nought on the other.

I have tried to show that silence, or the experience of it, corresponds to the pure, or, if one prefers, to the empty, longing of the auditory power for adequate performance. It seems understandable that this kind of auditory experience comes closer to the meaning of Nought than does the corresponding experience of darkness on the part of the visual power, the reason being, one might suggest, that it is the ear which primarily is the conveyor of meaning and thus becomes subservient in a particular manner to the rational powers. Without hearing the spoken word no man indeed ever develops the potency of speech nor attains any degree of intellectual capacity. Although the word is a physical phenomenon and a reality apart from its meaning, we usually do not even notice the physical properties of the spoken word. Only when the word is mispronounced and thus spontaneously attracts our attention do we begin to notice it as *vox* and no longer as *verbum* or *sermo*. It exists for us mainly, even exclusively, as the medium by which meaning passes from one person to another.[55] The visible thing, on the other hand, is an object to the mind independently of any " symbolic " function it may have besides and above its physical appearance. The sense of sight, therefore, stands " below " that of hearing as transmitter

[55] See Ch. Blondel, *La conscience morbide*, Paris, 1914, p. 152 f. " . . . à nos yeux les mots se dépouillent de leur caractères sensibles pour s' identifier aux idées . . . nous franchissons les paroles d'autrui pour courir sus aux états d'âme que nous savons être derrière."

of meaning, although it is superior to the other in what concerns the immediate knowledge of reality.

The " experience of the Nought " in the emotional state of dread, then, is not an experience of the Nought itself, which cannot be an " object " in any sense whatsoever. It is the experience of non-fulfillment, of a mere and unsuccessful effort on the part of the mind to encounter an object.[56]

If the problem of the Nought is viewed from this angle, the notion becomes untenable that the Nought is an " extrapolation " or is found in the " prolongation " of an unending series of negations. In this we have to agree with Bergson. The Nought is not the result of a progressive destruction of the world without; it is rather the correlate of the " Nought within," that is, of the fact that the mind is " something " or may grasp itself in reflection only when and insofar as it is concerned with an object not itself.

Only in this sense, too, we may speak of the Nought as a " limit-notion "; it is not a limit of objective existence, but a limit of mental performance; it is the effect of the mind's reaching out for an object and, at the same time, being afraid of encountering no such object, because there is an intimate knowledge of the dependence of the contingent mind on things which exist independently of this mind. The mere desire to know carries with itself no guarantee of fulfillment. And it does not because it is a contingent and finite mind.

I shall not try to discuss in detail how this interpretation conforms to the analysis of dread I have given in a previous essay.[57] But if it was said there that dread reveals to man his " ontic status," his finiteness and contingency, it is easy to see how the two views, on the significance of dread and on the nature of the Nought, accord with one another.

Perhaps one remark is in place to guard against a possible but mistaken identification. One recalls the famous word of

[56] However careful one has to be in the use of examples taken from psychopathology, one may refer to the statement of certain patients who definitely speak of a " sentiment of void " within themselves.

[57] Cf. note 45.

Kant that " concepts without intuition are void." But it is not this void or emptiness to which the foregoing discussion refers. The Nought is no concept, not even one without founding intuition; it is not an *ens rationis*. It is a mere name for a state. This state is, ordinarily, not actually experienced. But it is a possibility inherent to all our mental performances.[58]

Concluding Remarks

Of the " Nought for us," namely the absence of any perceivable object, we have no experiential knowledge. The fact that our field of vision is limited passes unnoticed. The fact that there are " sounds," that is acoustical waves, which we do not perceive, never becomes part of our experience. To the absence of tactual or kinaesthetic perception corresponds no definite datum of consciousness.

The notion of the Nought arises in situations in which the natural inclinations of the mind remain unfulfilled. The phenomena of non-fulfillment range from the expectation of receiving a certain impression and being disappointed to the experience of emptiness and mere preparedness in the intellect. To this extent there is a continuous line from the phenomenon of " nothing is there " to " there is nothing." The first statement, however, is meaningful, because it asserts that some thing is absent, whereas other things are not; this is what may be generally called the experience of the " gap." The second statement, on the contrary, has no true sense if " nothing " (or " the Nought ") is considered as a name referring to an immediate or mediate experience of objective reference.

The non-fulfillment in the field of sensory awareness is experienced as darkness and as silence. It is, accordingly, understandable that these terms are used in reference to the

[58] Under the precautions mentioned before one might point to certain abnormal phenomena, ranging from the " estrangement of reality," to " depersonalization " and the *délire de négation*. In the first-named state, the person has the impression that things and events have lost somehow their " substantiality," they are " mere appearances," have no longer the significance they used to have.

absolute Nought. The experience of darkness may, perhaps, be explained so as to conform with either the Scholastic or any other theory of sensation. Its physical counterpart is the total absence of any optical stimulus, but not of all stimulation. The experience has indeed an undeniably positive character. I have submitted a hypothetical interpretation of our " seeing black "; and I maintain that with the hypothetical assumption of " central grey " one does not get closer to a satisfactory solution, because to recognize that a shade is not yet perfect black one must have some image of what black really is like.[59]

One can conceive of darkness or silence as little as a " limit " of things visible or audible, as one can make use of this notion to elucidate the nature of the Nought. The Nought is not a limit in any sense comparable to that common in mathematics. It has no " operational " definition. Nor has it any definite value or place in the order of things. The attempt to establish an analogy between the mathematical Nought (zero) and the Nought, which one may call either experiential or metaphysical, is bound to fail. First, because in such an attempt is implied a truly illegitimate transition from the field of logic into that of being. Secondly, because the underlying conception entails a confusion of " content " on one hand and " act " on the other.[60] Since the Nought cannot be an object, neither can it become a " content " corresponding to an act of the mind. The Nought, like the gap, the missing element, the word not recalled, corresponds to an " empty " act (a *Leerform des Bewusstseins*, as some might say). In this sense it is correct to name *nihil* both the *absolutum* and the *privativum*.

The experience of the Nought, if this expression is permissible, is not of something coming from without. It is, therefore,

[59] In any case, things are much more complicated than some have believed. See, e. g., Durandus a S. Porciano, *In IV Libr. Sent.*, Venetiis, 1568, I, d. 36, q. 1, f. 97, r, a: " si visus et auditus semper essent in actu nunquam auditus cognosceret silentium, nec visus tenebras."

[60] It is hardly necessary to remark that the term " act " is used here not in the same sense as in ontology, but as a certain school in psychology (also in philosophy) has employed the term since Brentano and Husserl.

not the " Nought which annihilates " as Heidegger claims. The experience is, to say it once more, that of the " Nought within," of the contingency of the mind, its dependence on objects not its own products or creations, its helplessness to provide fulfillment for its natural needs by itself.

One question ought at least to be mentioned, although it is neither of the competence of psychology, or even of philosophy, to answer it, nor can it be treated here at any length. This question refers to the curious use the parlance of mysticism makes of the term " Nought." One example may stand for many. Angelus Silesius: " *Gott ist ein lauter Nichts*," God is a pure Nought. What this writer (and so many of his predecessors) has in mind is obviously not the same notion as that of Hegel quoted above. Related to this mode of expression are the many remarks which refer to God as silence or darkness, of which it is said sometimes that it is the same as the " superessential light."

It may be doubtful whether this or any other similar expression refers to the impossibility of making any definite statement on the nature of mystical experience and on what is experienced therein, or whether such words have another significance besides being statements of " negative theology." This is one of the points at which psychological analysis and philosophical speculation touch upon their boundaries. They become aware of the problems, since these arise somehow within the legitimate field of inquiry; they realize that there is more to be sought than their methods allow; but they must refrain from giving an answer. Human reason, indeed, is under the obligation to push on as far as its power will carry it; but once the boundaries of reason are attained, nothing remains but—in Goethe's words—to " venerate silently the incomprehensible " (*Das Unbegreifliche schweigend zu verehren*).

RUDOLF ALLERS

Catholic University of America,
Washington, D. C.

THE EPISTEMOLOGY OF THOMAS HOBBES

IN his work, *De Corpore*, Hobbes at last showed the fully developed relationship, which had long lain dormant in his mind, between his mechanistic concept of philosophy and his theory of knowledge. Consequently, with this most mature expression of his epistemology as our basic text, we shall attempt to gain some idea of Hobbes' final status in regard to his theory of knowledge.

To orientate ourselves better before beginning a consideration of this work it will be advisable to remark that this synthesis of his mechanistic principles, his methodology, and his cognitive principles did not, as Athena, "spring full-fledged from the head of Jove"; but rather they were presaged in many of his earlier works. *De Corpore* was the result of a long process of thought which had undergone modifications through reconsideration of many points. We shall, however, find that the modifications did not affect the fundamental Hobbesian tenets, but rather show themselves in different methods of approach to problems.

The work *De Corpore* was published in its finished form in 1655, and was originally a Latin work. First of the antecedents of the *De Corpore* was the small work which we know as the *Little Treatise*, a book dealing with the first principles of a natural philosophy. The date of publication of this latter mentioned work is uncertain, but from the available evidence we can say with a fair amount of assurance that it was not written later than 1635. It was not until 1644 that Hobbes again devoted himself to the problem of natural philosophy, the intervening time being occupied with writings of a political nature; and then to the writing of the *Tractatus Opticus*, a work in which he again dealt with the fundamental problems of the first work, the act of sense and the universality of the principle of motion. In the later work, however, he has advanced, for in

the *Little Treatise* he engages in controversy with Scholastic doctrines on the problems of natural philosophy. Now in the *Tractatus Opticus* he feels that these problems are solved — and he can go on to found his doctrines of mechanism and motion. It is somewhat difficult to ascertain the date of the original composition of the *De Corpore*, but it appears that this work was in the process of preparation over a period of some thirteen years. In the preface to Mersenne's *Ballistica* we find a reference apparently to a work of Hobbes entitled *De Motu, Loco, et Tempore* which is very probably the first draft of the book published in 1655 under the title of *De Corpore*.

Since, therefore, this work was being constantly amended over so long a period of time, we can conclude that it will represent certain changes of viewpoints, that it will evidence vestiges of old and new ideas bound together in this final synthesis of the doctrines of methodology and first principles of philosophy.

Hobbes states on the first page of his work that since all men are born with natural reason—philosophy—they are capable of reasoning somewhat; but when questions calling for long and intricate reasoning arise they fail for want of proper method; hence he will attempt to lay out the first elements of philosophy, as seeds from which the full-blown product may derive through a proper methodology.

> Philosophy is such knowledge of effects or appearances, as we acquire by true ratiocination from the knowledge we have first of their causes or generations; and again of such causes or generations as may be from knowing first their effects.[1]

Thus does Hobbes define philosophy; and, indeed, it is a noteworthy definition for it contains two important points: (1) only that knowledge is scientific which deals with causal relations; (2) this knowledge is scientific only when arrived at by right reasoning. Of course, the question that immediately

[1] Thomas Hobbes, *De Corpore*, ed. by Wm. Molesworth (London, John Bohn, 1839), p. 3.

arises is, "Why does Hobbes limit scientific or philosophical knowledge to knowledge conditioned by these two factors?" In our reply we shall first deal with the latter point, viz., knowledge is scientific only when gained by right reasoning.

Reasoning, there is the word we must fix upon as the key to the solution of the question. But first we must consider the hierarchy of knowledge instituted by Hobbes. There is a knowledge derived from sense and memory, and from experience and prudence, but this is not to be classed as philosophical knowledge. As Hobbes says:

> For the better understanding of which definition, we must consider, first, that although Sense and Memory of things, which are common to man and all living creatures, be knowledge, yet because they are given us immediately by nature, and not gotten by ratiocination, they are not philosophy.
>
> Secondly, seeing Experience is nothing but memory; and Prudence, or prospect into the future time, nothing but expectation of such things as we have already had experience of, Prudence also is not to be esteemed Philosophy.[2]

Sense, for Hobbes, is merely a means of proposing the phenomenon to the subject. And so there would be no question of the difference in kind of philosophical and sense knowledge had not Hobbes later written:

> Of all the phenomena or appearances which are near us, the most admirable is apparition itself; namely, that some natural bodies have in themselves the patterns almost of all things, and others of none at all. So that if the appearances be the principles by which we know all other things, we must needs acknowledge sense to be the principle by which we know those principles, and that all the knowledge we have is derived from it. And as for the causes of sense, we cannot begin our search of them from any other phenomena than that of sense itself. But you will say, by what sense shall we take notice of sense? I answer, by sense itself, namely, by the memory which for some time remains in us of things sensible, though they themselves pass away. For he that perceives that he hath perceived, remembers.[3]

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 3.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 389.

In this passage Hobbes seems to be saying that basically there is no difference in kind between sense and philosophical knowledge, that both of them are the result of principles of sense. Now, quite logically, the question may be put, "Is Hobbes a sensist or a rationalist?" But to answer this question we must first settle what Hobbes meant by empirical knowledge; and, secondly, we must try to find out where and how he drew the dividing line between empirical and philosophical knowledge. These questions, however, can be answered only by tracing them through Hobbes' development.

Already in his work *The Elements of Law* we find him proposing the distinction of knowledge into two classes, one is a mere knowledge gained by sensation, and a remembrance of it, while the other is a knowledge of the truth of propositions, a knowledge arrived at by understanding.[4] Here we see that Hobbes is attentive to the fact that there is a possibility of deducing new truths from given propositions, that truth can arise only from proposition and conclusions.

But now let us follow Hobbes in his description of empirical knowledge. The senses give us our original knowledge by observing the objects about us, and this knowledge is retained in us through the imagination and memory when the objects themselves have disappeared from our senses. To recall series of events we have association of ideas; while the reason for the coherence of ideas is the fact that thus objects were originally presented to us. Now when one has seen certain antecedents followed consistently by certain consequents he comes to expect that when he sees that which formerly was an antecedent to be present, the same consequent will follow it as previously; and this is called expectation. Presumption of fact is the reverse of the above mentioned process: having seen certain consequents follow certain antecedents one can conjecture upon seeing the

[4] ". . . There be two sorts of knowledge, whereof the one is nothing else but sense, or knowledge original, and remembrance of the same; the other is called science or knowledge of the truth of propositions, and how things are called, and is derived from an understanding . . . and of the former, the register we keep in books, is called history; but the registers of the latter are called the sciences." *The Elements of Law*, VI. 1.

same consequents, that they were preceded by the same antecedents that preceded them in the past. An experiment is the remembrance of what was antecedent, what consequent, and what concomitant. To have had a number of experiments is called experience. And when one has so often seen an antecedent followed by a consequent, or *vice versa*, that upon seeing one of them he concludes about the other, we call one the sign of the other.

Although many think that this ability to observe signs is the distinguishing mark of wisdom, yet it is not true; for this conjecturing rightly from experience is merely prudence. For wisdom we must have principles that are of universal application, while the conclusions from signs are endowed only with a high degree of probability.[5]

Hobbes' description of empirical knowledge with its reference to the rise of knowledge from sensation, to the association of ideas, to memory and imagination, is not particularly revolutionary, although, of course, it is thoroughly mechanistic since sensation is the result of motion rather than of the *species sensibilis*. But now the question arises, "What is wisdom, science?"

Experience, as Hobbes has shown, can but give us probability even in its most highly developed form; hence, he must introduce another source for obtaining the quality of universality in knowledge — but he doesn't. Both scientific and empirical knowledge he derives from experience.[6]

But there must be some added factor which will enable scientific knowledge to spring from empirical knowledge, or rather there must be some other source whence scientific knowledge is drawn. How, then, does Hobbes explain this discrepancy?

In the fifth chapter of the *Elements* Hobbes states that the

[5] *Op. cit.*, Chapter V.

[6] *Ibid.*, VI. 1-4. Although I have spoken of the universality in knowledge in regard to Hobbes, yet this term must not be understood in a sense synonymous with that of the Scholastic universal, since for Hobbes universality means universal applicability.

succession of ideas in our mind is the result of objects having been presented in this succession to our senses; and, moreover, each idea has been preceded and followed by innumerable acts of sense, with the result that we cannot at will make one idea follow another. Men, however, have the power to control the recall of these successions of ideas by their ability to establish marks. A mark, according to Hobbes, "is a sensible object which man erecteth voluntarily to himself, to the end to remember thereby somewhat past, when the same is objected to his sense."[7] And it is this ability to set up the device of marks that distinguishes man from brute.

A certain type of mark is the *name*, which is a sound of man's voice arbitrarily imposed upon some object as a mark whereby he may recall the object to mind.[8] We should note here that heretofore the name has been used purely in a mnemonic sense, it has not been stated that it has any intrinsic element of knowledge nor does it have any relationship to knowledge other than a purely arbitrary and extrinsic one. Suddenly, however, Hobbes says:

> By the advantage of names it is that we are capable of science, which beasts for want of them, are not; nor man, without the use of them.[9]

This is to give another nuance to the idea of the name, for formerly it was only an aid to recollection, now it is something that differentiates the pure sense knowledge of animals from the scientific knowledge of men; and, moreover, it is because of names that men have science. Hence there is now an intrinsic relationship between the name and knowledge. Name is not the result of scientific knowledge, but rather the cause of it. Consequently it is the name which serves as the basis of dividing scientific from empirical knowledge.

Man can also connect names to form propositions, and these again to form syllogisms, and from this connection arises truth

[7] *Ibid.*, V. 1.
[8] See *ibid.*, V, for full explanation of the idea of the name.
[9] *Ibid.*, V. 2.

or falsity according as we affirm or deny correctly or incorrectly a predicate of a subject.[10] It is interesting to note that Hobbes states that truth and a true proposition are one and the same thing, that falsity and a false proposition are one. Apparently, from these words, Hobbes cannot conceive of truth apart from its connection with a proposition, a doctrine that smacks of utter nominalism, for according to Hobbes, the only way that we can err is by applying a name wrongly or rightly. Hence the application of the name is the only determining factor in knowledge.

But why should truth appear when we merely join one name to another by means of the copula *is?* Hobbes explains this by stating that two factors are necessary for scientific knowledge: (1) Truth, which is a statement that the subject is contained in the predicate; (2) Evidence, which is a concomitant consciousness of what the names signify.[11] Hence it seems that Hobbes is introducing another factor in distinguishing scientific from empirical knowledge, viz., the idea, the consciousness of what the words mean. But this is an apparent contradiction of what he had formerly postulated, that the names were the cause of our differing in knowledge from the animals. Hobbes, then, is not at all clear upon the ultimate basis for scientific knowledge. This fact is first shown by his equivocal use of the name as a mnemonic and logical entity, and then his *deus ex machina* introduction of the doctrine of evidence. He will, indeed, cling tenaciously to the distinction between empirical and scientific knowledge, but the *ratio sufficiens* of this difference is not at all clear-cut in his mind.

What, then, is the relation of experience to science? In the *Elements*, as later in *De Corpore*, Hobbes states that both arise from experience: empirical knowledge is the experience of the effect of things acting upon us from without, while scientific knowledge is the experience we have of the right use of names and propositions, but propositions, in turn, presuppose ideas which are perceptions reproduced.[12]

[10] *Ibid.*, V. 10 and 13. [11] *Ibid.*, VI. 3. [12] *Ibid.*, VI, 1 ff.

Is Hobbes, then, a sensist or rationalist? Our answer is simple: in so far as he attributes the ultimate source of ideas to perceptions he is a sensist; but in so far as he postulates a realm of certainty and of universal application he is a nominalistic rationalist. Let us here in conclusion quote Hobbes' own statement in which he puts clearly his concept of the genesis of scientific knowledge.

> Knowledge, therefore, which we call science, I define to be the evidence of truth, from some beginning or principle of sense. For the truth of a proposition is never evident, until we conceive the meaning of the words or terms whereof it consisteth, which are always conceptions of the mind; nor can we remember those conceptions without the thing that produced the same by our senses. The first principle of knowledge therefore is, that we have such and such conceptions; the second that we have thus and thus named the things whereof they are conceptions; the third is, that we have joined those names in such a manner as they be concluding. And by these four steps the conclusion is known and evident, and the truth of the conclusion said to be known. And of these two kinds of knowledge, whereof the former is experience of fact, and the latter evidence of truth: as the former, if it be great, is called prudence, so the latter, if it be much, hath usually been called, both by ancient and modern writers, sapience or wisdom; and of this latter, man only is capable; of the former, brute beasts also participate.[13]

We have now seen that part of Hobbes' epistemology which is contained in the *Elements*, and from this view we further saw why he thought it necessary to divide the realm of knowledge. Moreover this shows us why in the *De Corpore* Hobbes thought fit to define his concept of philosophy with regard to empirical knowledge, for between the two types of knowledge he saw a close relationship as well as an antipodal difference.

Our next consideration must be directed to the development of the name theory — that wobbly cornerstone of Hobbesian epistemology — as it appears in the *De Corpore*. In this work the name theory is still present and active, but modified. Yet the theory is not entirely clear. Hobbes admits the possibility

[13] *Ibid.*, VI. 4.

of logical thinking without words (*sine verbis*)[14] and with this admission the necessity for evidence in attaining to scientific knowledge goes, for evidence is a concomitant consciousness of the meaning of a word. This is a decided change in Hobbes' view on the constituents of scientific knowledge. The reason for the change lies, perhaps, in the controversy which he and Descartes had following the publication of the *Meditationes* of Descartes.[15]

Yet Hobbes is incorrigible, he will not be weaned from his name theory—his is a nominalist doctrine. This appears most clearly in his handling of the universal. He was thoroughly traditional in denying a separate objective existence to the universal, but, moreover, he even denied it a psychological existence.

> . . . They err that say the idea of anything is universal; as if there could be in the mind an image of a man, which were not the image of some one man, but a man simply, which is impossible; for every idea is one, and of one thing; but they are deceived in this, that they put the name of the thing for the idea thereof.[16]

Hence there is not a universal idea either objectively or subjectively. But Hobbes needs the concept of the universal to bolster his division of knowledge into the absolute and the contingent. What, then, is his explanation of the genesis of such concepts? In the quotation just stated Hobbes says that we know the universal by means of the name, and that the fallacy of the existence of the universal, either objectively or subjectively, arose from confusing the name with the idea, i. e., we attributed universality to the idea rather than to the name. Our ability to think in terms of universality — which, for Hobbes, means to understand the extent of the applicability of a name — rests upon our imagination by which we call up in our mind several things answering to the name.

[14] Thomas Hobbes, *De Corpore*, ed. by Wm. Molesworth (London, John Bohn, 1839), vol. I, p. 3.

[15] See F. Brandt, *Thomas Hobbes' Mechanical Conception of Nature* (London, Librairie Hachette, 1928), p. 230 for a sample of the type of letters passed between Hobbes and Descartes.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 60.

> . . . Of names, some are common to many things, as a man, a tree. . . . And a common name, being the name of many things severally taken, but not collectively of all together (as man is not the name of all mankind, but of every one, as of Peter, John, and the rest severally) is therefore called an universal name; and therefore this word universal is never the name of any thing existent in nature, nor of any idea or phantasm formed in the mind, but always the name of some word or name; so that when a living creature, a stone, a spirit, or any other thing, is said to be universal, it is not to be understood, that any man, stone, etc., ever was or can be universal, but only that these words, living creature, stone, etc., are universal names, that is, names common to many things; and the conceptions answering them in our mind, are the images and phantasms of several living creatures, or other things. And, therefore, for the understanding of the extent of an universal name, we need no other faculty but that such names bring sometimes one thing, sometimes another, into our mind. . . .[17]

But this explanation only entangles Hobbes the more in his labyrinth of nominalism. The name is the element of universality in our knowledge — so he said originally, and so he repeats again, but now he introduces a series of images to explain the psychological process of the universal. Each of these, however, represents a separate and concrete idea, and they are connected with each other only by an arbitrary psychological succession. The name, moreover, as Hobbes stated in his shift from the opinion held in the *Elements,* is the expression of the concrete idea. Hence we see that the very source of universality, the name, has been drained of this essential quality by Hobbes himself.

We can see here that Hobbes has two definite convictions: all ideas are concrete, and there is a possibility of "universal knowledge," that is to say, a knowledge arising from universal application of names. It is his desire to effect a *rapprochement* between these two facts that leads him on first in one path, then in another. Psychological observation furnishes his basis for stating that our ideas are concrete; the name theory will have to serve as basis for the proof of the universal knowledge. Hence between the level of the concrete idea and that of universal knowledge Hobbes has established the level of the names,

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

the result of concrete ideas but potentially having a universal element by being applicable to individuals in several instances. What, then, are the names? They hang suspended between universality and individuality with a tormenting indetermination. As a last attempt Hobbes illustrates his use of the name theory in explaining the process of a syllogism.

> The thoughts in the mind answering to a direct syllogism, proceed in this manner; first, there is conceived a phantasm of the thing named, with that accident or quality thereof, for which it is in the minor proposition called by that name which is the subject; next, the mind has a phantasm of the same thing without accident, or quality, for which it hath the name, that in the same proposition is the predicate; thirdly, the thought returns of the same thing as having that accident in it, for which it is called by the name, that is the predicate of the major proposition; and lastly, remembering that all those are the accidents of one and the same thing, it concludes that those three names are also names of one and the same thing; that is to say, the conclusion is true. For example, when this syllogism is made, *man is a living creature*, *a living creature is a body*, therefore, *man is a body*, the mind conceives first an image of a man speaking or discoursing, and remembers that that, which so appears, is called *man*; then it has the image of the same man moving, and remembers that that, which appears so, is called *living creature*; thirdly, it conceives an image of the same man, as filling some place or space, and remembers that what appears so is called *body*; and lastly, when it remembers that that thing, which was extended, and moved and spake, was one and the same thing, it concludes that the three names, *man*, *living creature*, and *body*, are names of the same thing, and that therefore *man is a living creature* is a true proposition. From whence it is manifest, that living creatures that have not the use of speech, have no conception or thought in the mind, answering to a syllogism made of universal propositions; seeing it is necessary to think not only of the thing, but also by turns to remember the divers names, which for divers considerations thereof are applied to the same.[18]

Yet on the broken wings of nominalism Hobbes cannot rise above a purely concrete knowledge. He employs names, he calls in memory, but all deal only with concrete fact. We must conclude, therefore, that he has not solved the enigma of the individual and the universal.

[18] *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50.

Heretofore we have been dealing with Hobbes' second postulate for scientific knowledge: it must be the result of ratiocination. We now turn to his first postulate: scientific knowledge must be a knowledge of causal relations. Now in our treatment of this we must consider his methodology.

If we recall his definition of philosophy, we shall remember that he stated that such knowledge consisted in knowing cause-effect relationships, which can be known only through a process of deduction. Consequently we may conclude that philosophical knowledge must be deductive. Recall also that Hobbes had established two realms of knowledge in the *Elements*, for this is very important in understanding what he meant by saying that philosophical knowledge is deductive, and concerned with causal relations.

Empirical knowledge also is deductive and concerned with causal relations, but it differs from scientific knowledge in that the latter knows causal relations only through experience, while the former knows causal relations by logical deductions. Hobbes now begins the explanation of method, that means whereby we come to know causes. As he says,

> . . . Method, therefore, in the study of philosophy, is the shortest way of finding out effects by their known causes, or of causes by their known effects. But we are then said to know any effect, when we know that there be causes of the same, and in what subject those causes are, and in what subject they produce that effect, and in what manner they work the same. And this is the science of causes. . . . All other science . . . is either perception by sense, or the imagination, or memory remaining after such perception.
>
> The first beginnings, therefore, of knowledge, are the phantasms of sense and imagination; and that there be such phantasms we know well enough by nature; but to know why they be, or from what causes they proceed, is the work of ratiocination; which consists . . . in composition, and division or resolution. There is therefore no method, by which we find out the causes of things, but is either compositive or resolutive, or partly compositive, and partly resolutive. And the resolutive is commonly called analytical method, as the compositive is called synthetical.[19]

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 66.

Hobbes now must explain whence to derive the premises from which to deduce this scientific knowledge. He states again that all knowledge begins from the sense and imagination. But to know the causes of these perceptions we must have recourse to reasoning; and the method used to find the ultimate principles of perception will be either analytic or synthetic. For true science we must know by the analytic method since by this method we analyze each given body until we arrive at the causes of those universal principles common not to this body alone but rather to all matter. Then, since the singular contains in its nature the universals, we must synthesize the causes of the universals to know that of the singular.

Yet for the highest and most universal causes no method is needed since they are self-evident, being made so by the fact that they all have one universal cause, motion; and since motion can have no cause except motion, there is no need for any further analysis by which to find a more fundamental cause. Here Hobbes is again straddling orders of being, for by the introduction of motion he seeks to furnish an ultimate basis for the explanation of physical and cognitive fact. Henceforward to explain different phenomena we have but to refer to the difference of motion of their composite parts. Thus by the synthesis of these partial motions we come to a knowledge of the causes of the singular. Moreover sciences are to be differentiated not on a basis of immateriality of formal object, but upon the difference and complexity of motion which they embrace.[20]

This, then, is what Hobbes meant by his statement that philosophical knowledge consists in a deductive knowledge of causal relations. He would first analyze particulars until he arrived at the fundamental premise of motion whence he would deduce all other knowledge as from a first cause until he had constructed a doctrine pervaded by motion. This was, indeed, a revolutionary doctrine since into the realm of formality it introduced as the supreme factor a purely positive fact, motion. But what conditioned Hobbes' view?

[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 66-73.

Of two facts Hobbes was firmly convinced: that philosophical knowledge differed from empirical in that it was demonstrative, the result of deduction; and that motion was the cause of all reality and of all real processes. And, indeed, it appeared that the all-pervasive rôle motion plays was not too difficult to prove, since there was no gap to be bridged between metaphysics and other less abstract sciences, for metaphysics was non-existent. The only difficulty was the transition from mathematics to mechanics and physics, for mathematics deals with quantity only while the latter two deal with mobile quantity. Hobbes, however, could not allow his system to be marred by such a discrepancy, hence he introduced motion into his original premise. Motion would, therefore, fulfil a formal duty, it would give formal unity to the entire system by serving as the ultimate explanation of all. Still Hobbes' introduction of motion as the ultimate explanation of all reality is quite understandable, since for him it was the core of all natural phenomena, the explanation of which was his chief concern.

Yet it is quite possible that besides a desire to establish a "metaphysics" for his system, he was also influenced by a methodological consideration, viz., knowledge can be arrived at only by construction, and construction is possible only when we have searched out the ultimate causes of things. Having seen the value of construction as a means of arriving at new knowledge, he introduces the doctrine of motion as a principle destined to be a potent factor in constructing new knowledge.

It is interesting to note that by introducing motion as the basic cause in all philosophical knowledge, and by limiting this type of knowledge to deduction from causal relations, Hobbes ruled out political and historical sciences on the grounds that they pertained only to empirical knowledge; and theology on the ground that it was not deducible by reason, since it was an object of faith rather than of knowledge.[21]

What, then, is the value of a study of Hobbesian epistemology? Primarily it contains an historical value; but more

[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

than that it enables us to see the basic and systematized principles whence modern mechanistic philosophy has derived its impetus. Hobbes wrote at a time when traditional philosophy was breaking down beneath the blows of scientific fact for want of able defenders. Mersenne, Galileo, and Descartes were propagating new theories based on mathematical method and experimental fact—theories which offered absolute certainty to those who would accept.

Hobbes moved in this milieu dominated by these geniuses of matter and motion, and upon himself he took the task of setting out a consistent explanation of the new truths. Influenced by his earlier study of Scholasticism he sought to frame a consistent doctrine by the introduction of a necessary and universal principle which would be applied in every case with infallible results. Hobbes was not a materialist, but rather a motionalist. He sought in the concept of motion something that would be akin to a metaphysical principle. He denied the worth and validity of the traditional metaphysics; yet he was driven to its emphasis on the formal aspect of knowledge in order to mould a consistent and unified system. He adopted motion as that which would serve his problem; and to this physical entity he gave the *virtus* of a metaphysical principle.

It is true that Hobbes must be admired for his attempt at synthesis; but it is a shabby synthesis he achieves, and necessarily so, for he was playing fast and loose with different orders of being and was, consequently, vitiating his entire edifice of knowledge. Hobbes' epistemology could not be anything but a web of contradictions for he wished to deny the formality of being and still to cling to the universality of knowledge, to presuppose metaphysical principles, but in fact to deny their validity, and to introduce physical fact to fulfil their duties. The confusion of modern scientific philosophy is quite understandable when we consider the muddled seed whence it sprang.

William A. Gerhard

University College,
University of Chicago

BOOK REVIEW

A Philosophy of Poetry: Based on Thomistic Principles. By Rev. John Duffy, C. SS. R. The Catholic University Press. Washington, D. C. 1945. pp. 258 with bibliography and index.

Because the question what a poem is or why and how it is made is prior to the question whether this poem at hand is a good one, the practice of poetic criticism rests ultimately on some opinion as to the nature and purpose of poetry. The philosophy of poetry, then, assumes the position of a foundation for criticism and a standard for literary judgment. As one's philosophy goes, so will follow criticism.

This is indicated clearly by contemporary confusion in literary matters. The same poetry is variously evaluated by the Marxists, the liberals, the sociologists, the classicists, the purists and the modernists. Only a divergence in philosophy can explain this variety of opinion. Catholic criticism, though it clings to several general principles, is perplexed and at odds with itself. The diversity of Catholic opinions of the work of Waugh, Eliot, Joyce, Farrell, Kilmer, indeed the whole literary field, serves only to point up the necessity for some examination into the foundations of literary expression, its purpose, its nature, and its creation. This task is the one undertaken by Father Duffy in this book.

There has been little done to help him. Aristotle, in the *Poetics*, has stood as the master in the tradition for twenty-two centuries. When St. Thomas wrote he conceded the question of poetics settled by Aristotle, at least in its principles. Because there was little poetry in that time that needed analysis the problem scarcely vexed him or his contemporaries. With the Renaissance, however, the humanities and the literary arts flourished. But at that time theologians were too busy defending the faith against the errors of the humanists to write philosophical tracts on the nature of the humanist art. Cardinal Cajetan's debate with Pico della Mirandola is an indication of the opposition that existed between the two schools. Contemporary Thomism has produced little on the philosophy of literature. The foundations of philosophy, the problem of knowledge, the relations between reason and faith, and lately between science and philosophy, have successively taken the attention of philosophers. Poetry, literature, and music have only recently been examined and studied. Further Duffy's dissertation on poetry is the largest and most complete treatment on the subject to be presented from a Thomistic viewpoint.

The book, then, is welcome. As a contribution of real speculative effort, in an attempt to apply Thomistic principles to a painfully pressing modern

problem, it merits a wide reception and discussion. To the writer and the faculty that guided him Catholic theologians, philosophers and critics are in debt.

Father Duffy's intention, as outlined early in his book, is to treat of the nature of poetry, giving, in at least essential outline, the basic principles of the creation and experience of poetry. His approach is metaphysical and psychological. His methodology is to clarify a principle or doctrine, to show its Thomistic origin and meaning; and then to apply it to the matter at hand. This clarity of intention and execution is one of the great virtues of the book.

Father Duffy chooses as the start of his book a nominal definition of poetry: a beautiful verbal artefact. The argument of the book is an exposition of this definition, part by part, until finally the nature of poetry becomes clear. Toward the end he formulates a real definition gathered from this analysis of his subject.

The book, then, is divided into three parts corresponding to the parts of the definition. The first treats of beauty, and in it Fr. Duffy presents the Thomistic doctrine on beauty, and makes explicit in it those elements which apply especially to the fine arts and poetry. The second part is concerned with art; here the writer treats of art in general, and of the fine arts, and prepares the ground for the third section which treats *ex professo* of the nature of poetry. In this third section, Fr. Duffy applies those conclusions and opinions concerning beauty and art which he had exposed in the first two sections. In the third section he treats also of problems which are proper to poetry and poetic creation: inspiration, words, images, rhyme, and other similar topics. A final section summarizes the whole book and adds brief reflections on some contemporary questions: pure poetry, the logic of the imagination, and poetic meaning.

In the first section, the treatment on beauty, Fr. Duffy delineates and discusses three kinds of beauty: ontological beauty which is convertible with being, relational beauty which springs from the ordered splendor of the form and depends on clarity and proportion and integrity, and experienced beauty which depends in part on relational beauty in the thing, and in part on habits of beauty formed in the one perceiving the beautiful thing.

Giving experienced beauty a special chapter, he analyses the definition: *id quod visum placet*, and explains the role of the cognitive and appetitive faculties in the experience of the beautiful. He shows the intimate and essential relation between the sensitive and intellectual factors of cognition and the role of the will and the sense appetites in the appreciation of an object as beautiful. He demonstrates the necessity of a reflex cognition, or the consciousness of a state of uncommon knowledge. He adds, finally, a section dealing with intuition which he analyses in relation to the Thomistic theory of knowledge.

Fr. Duffy's second major section deals with art. He treats of art in general as a habit, and gives the traditional definitions and divisions. He defines fine art as concerned solely with the production of the beautiful. Analysing artistic creation from the view of the four causes, Fr. Duffy demonstrates the interplay and interdependence of each cause in the production of the artefact. In analysing the concept: *Recta ratio factibilium*, Fr. Duffy holds the subject of the *recta ratio* as the intellect formally, but dispositively the *vis cogitativa* and the internal senses. This *recta ratio* is joined with the will and the sense appetite to form the efficient cause of the artefact. Here much of Fr. Duffy's analysis depends on the intimate connection between the intellectual and sensitive faculties, and reflection and continuation so fundamental to St. Thomas' theory of knowledge. Treating of the material cause Fr. Duffy indicates its influence on the form and, as in poetry, its dependence on the form. As the final cause of fine art Fr. Duffy places the perfect expression of the exemplar primarily, and secondarily the principling of delight in the artist and in the one contemplating the artefact.

The arguments of the first two sections of the book are joined and related according to the following plan: Beauty is convertible with being; thus a thing, inasmuch as it is, is beautiful. But the being of an artefact is to be a similitude or a representation of the exemplar in the artist's mind. Therefore to the degree that an artwork represents the exemplar it is beautiful. But the perfect expression of the exemplar requires splendor, clarity and integrity in the artefact. These factors are the foundation for relational beauty in the artwork. Given habits of beauty in the one perceiving, all the factors of beauty are present, and the experience of beauty follows.

Having established and explained the principles of his analysis, Fr. Duffy proceeds to poetry itself. He begins his third major section with a subject proper and peculiar to poetry as a preface to what follows by treating of the degrees of poetic contemplation, the objects of poetic contemplation, and inspiration. He adds a personal account of the creation of a poem as illustrative of the principles he has analytically described.

Beginning the work of the dissertation proper, Fr. Duffy treats of the *operative word*, or the exemplar in poetic creation, as it is joined to the will in creation. In its proper matter he shows the interrelation of all the cognitive and appetitive faculties in the making of a poem. Brief sections deal with psychological phenomena found in literary creation: association, searching for the correct word and the like.

Fr. Duffy is concerned next with the form and matter of poetry. He discusses the matter at considerable length, moving from words, the external matter, to the proper matter, verbal images. In this section he reviews the philosophy of language and semantics, establishing his con-

clusion by combining the foundations established by St. Thomas and the reflections and opinions on the poetic process provided by modern writers and philosophers. The form of a poem he accounts as an intentional binding together of the parts of the poem for the sake of the signification. Next, the experience of a poem, on the part of the poet and on the part of the reader, are analysed. The common and proper elements of each are shown; and poetic experience and its psychological elements are exposed at some length. The book closes with some brief remarks on modern problems in poetry, and a summary of the whole dissertation.

Taken as a whole, the book is a valuable contribution of original speculative thought on a vexing modern problem. In the movement of the whole argument single sections stand out for the clarity and penetration of their thought. The most valuable sections are those which clarify the interplay of all the faculties, sensitive and intellectual, cognitive and appetitive, in the creation and the experience of a poem, or the creation and experience of a beautiful thing in general. In the section in which he treats of the matter of a poem, established to be verbal images, Fr. Duffy has thought out perhaps the best treatment at hand in English. In the psychological sections of his dissertation, Fr. Duffy is uniformly good. In a word, Fr. Duffy has done splendid work on the efficient and material causes of poetry, and in its creation and experience.

Dissenting criticism of Fr. Duffy's book begins at once at the end, and at the beginning. At the end, because Fr. Duffy's final paragraph is a gracious paraphrase of St. Thomas' conclusion to his book on the divine names, in which, having commended to God, the Giver of all lights, the truth he has exposed, he invites enlightenment; at the beginning, because it is at the very beginning of Fr. Duffy's work that his error has its root.

Extrinsic evidence that Fr. Duffy's thesis, in parts at least, is not as Thomistic as his title indicates, is given by his reaction to several texts. Most surprising is the discovery that, while he intended to write a book on poetry from a Thomist view, Fr. Duffy has not mentioned Aristotle once, nor quoted, nor referred to, nor depended on, the *Poetics*, and the doctrine taught there. To attempt a Thomistic analysis of poetry and to omit the traditional doctrine as set forth by Aristotle is temerarious at best. In addition, and not unrelated to his neglect of Arisotle, Fr. Duffy has evident and confessed difficulty in understanding what St. Thomas means in three traditional texts on the nature of poetry, texts which show, in addition, St. Thomas' fundamental agreement with Aristotle's position.

The texts are: . . . . (*sunt*) *artes quae sunt ordinatae ad hominum delectationem.* (I *Meta.*, l. 1) on which Fr. Duffy comments: "perhaps these are what we should call today fine arts," but he adds ". . . . there is little or no help on this question of the Fine Arts as far as St. Thomas is concerned." A second text is: . . . . .*poetica scientia est de his quae*

propter defectum veritatis non potest a ratione capi (I *Sent.*, *Prol.*, q. 1, a. 5, ad 3um), a text repeated twice in the first part of the *Summa* and again in the first of the second, of which Fr. Duffy confesses: "It is difficult to know what St. Thomas means by a defect of truth on poetic knowledge." On a third text: *Nam poetae est inducere ad aliquod virtuosum per aliquam praecedentem* (*decentem*) *repraesentationem* (I *Post. Analy.*, lect. 1), Fr. Duffy seems to reject the obvious meaning of moral virtue and explains the text by equating virtue to beauty as a *bonum honestum*. Since each of these texts clarifies some point in the traditional doctrine on the nature of poetry, the fact that Fr. Duffy has difficulty with their obvious meanings indicates extrinsically that, in the points considered in these texts at least, he had not understood St. Thomas' mind. An intrinsic criticism may serve to clarify his divergence.

Certainly Fr. Duffy's thesis is Thomistic in the sense that the principles of the metaphysical, and especially the psychological, analysis he makes are undoubtedly those of St. Thomas. But it is possible, nevertheless, that the structure in which Fr. Duffy has cast them is not. Thus, for example, while his understanding of the psychological elements of poetic creation is excellent, his understanding of the exact nature of poetry is not.

Fr. Duffy's divergence from the traditional teaching on poetry has its logical spring in the definition which he chooses in the beginning of his book as the structure of his work: a poem is a verbal beautiful artefact.

This definition, in which "beautiful artefact" is the genus and "verbal" the difference, labors under the difficulty that the genus "beautiful artefact" is too common and generic. In the course of his dissertation, moreover, Fr. Duffy does not sufficiently analyse these concepts, nor sufficiently refine their meaning, to attain an understanding of the real genus: delightful imitation.

The poet's "primary concern is a disinterested concern with beauty," Fr. Duffy writes in his book. This statement is indicative, perhaps, of the chief fault in his analysis, for his whole argument on poetry is pivoted around beauty, is explained by it, and resolved in terms of it. Fr. Duffy states that the intention of a poet is primarily to create a beautiful thing. He equates poetic delight with the delight that follows the contemplation of a beautiful thing. In one place he has translated a text to include beauty when there is little justification for it in the text itself, and he has so reasoned that he defines the fine arts solely in terms of the beautiful.

In choosing the concept of beauty as the beginning and core of his book on poetry, Fr. Duffy has not penetrated the essence of poetry. And in doing so he has fallen into an error characteristic of contemporary philosophers and critics. Since Kant and Lessing, the so-called Father of Modern Criticism, philosophers have isolated beauty and have attempted to judge all artistic value in its terms. One of the results of this work has been

to divert attention from the real problem and to slow up and prevent fruitful investigation. Beauty is related to the fine arts undoubtedly, but not so primarily. To be beautiful is not of the essence of a work of fine art; at least it is not the essential constituent. What is proper and essential to fine art is that it be an imitation, as Aristotle states in the first chapter of the Poetics; and it is proper to poetry that it be an imitation, accomplished through verbal images. On this last point Fr. Duffy has written clearly and well. But by choosing beauty and the beautiful artefact as a genus he has succeeded in confusing his thought, and reducing the analysis of so significant and important a quantity as poetry to one part of a new, and somewhat amorphous, science of aesthetics.

This misconception of the role of beauty in poetry has several fruits which appear in Fr. Duffy's dissertation. It is in these conclusions that we are able to see the error which is contained in his fundamental structure. Specifically, Fr. Duffy is at variance with Aristotle and the traditional doctrine in three places: the form of poetry, the source of poetic delight, and the end of poetry.

Fr. Duffy states that the form of a poem is the binding together of the parts of the poem, an intentional shape analogous to the shape of a statue which is its form, an intentional binding together for the sake of related (contextual) signification. He holds further that the being of a poem (which the form gives) is to be an image of what is in the poet's mind. A poem is perfect as a poem, then, if it exactly re-presents the form which the poet intends. The measure of its correspondence is the measure of its being.

But this is an incomplete picture. Granted, indeed, that there must be a correspondence between the poem and the exemplar—what is the exemplar? A poem is a reflection of the exemplar—but what is the exemplar's relation to creation and reality? Fr. Duffy places the whole being of a poem in the genus "beautiful artefact," and it is that; but that is common. What is its genus peculiarly as poem? It is precisely here that Aristotle and the traditional teaching of the *Poetics* should have found a place in Fr. Duffy's analysis. For a poem properly is an imitation or an image (*imago*) of a character, action, or passion of a man, effected through verbal images, an imitation of a singular experience, not as singular however, but as universal. And for that reason Aristotle says that poetry is more philosophical and of graver import than history. Thus the form of a poem is a verbal imitation, and bears a relation to an action of man as a unique special reproduction.

There is a special indication that Fr. Duffy has confused the notion of form in a poem, by choosing an entity which is material to the real form, in the fact that he finds an analogy to the form of a poem in the shape of a statue. But evidently the shape of a statue is not its form, nor the

order of colors in a painting nor of tones in a symphony. Each of these material forms is potential to a further form, the universal character, movement of the passions or action expressed in this individual painting, statue or poem. One does not know this empirical stone Discus Thrower, but *the* Discus Thrower. One's knowledge of a statue is not of this empirical shape, but of a universal contained in it and, indicated through it. Similarly in poetry, the form is not merely the binding of the parts as expressing the exemplar; it is an imitation, cast in a universal mode, expressed through these singular verbal images, of an action or movement of the passions of man.

The problem of universality and singularity in fine art and poetry is the most fundamental difficulty in the philosophy of art. Because of the ordination of his dissertation around beauty, Fr. Duffy does not touch it. This artistic universality is fundamental. The poetic representation of a fact and the empirical presentation differ in this very universality. And thus there is a difference between a portrait and a photograph of the same man. This universality, not the logical universal or nature which is abstracted even from an empirical singular, is a universal which is expressed in the artistic singular. In poetry it is the principle of the special character of poetic cognition or science.

Singulars and contingents as such are unknowable to a human intellect, being immersed in matter. The mind, seeking to know singular objects in a mode more connatural to it, achieves this in artistic knowledge; and delights greatly in knowledge of this mode. The mind seeks, ultimately, a mode of knowledge of a singular proper to an angel; and delights in the approximation to it. Thus poetry supplies for the defect of truth or knowledge in a singular by giving it, through images, a universality and a greater intelligibility. This is the meaning of the text: . . . . *poetica scientia est de his quae propter defectum veritatis non potest a ratione capi; unde oportet quod quasi quibusdam similitudinibus ratio seducatur* (I *Sent*. Prol. q. 1, a. 5, ad 3um), a text of St. Thomas with which Fr. Duffy had difficulty.

The exact nature of this universal, how a poem is at once of a thing, singular and concrete, and of an idea, a universal, is matter for pressing study in the philosophy of poetry, especially in the case of the post-Renaissance lyric. Aristotle has worked it out for the drama and the epic poem; it remains for contemporary philosophers to use his principles and St. Thomas' to bring the tradition to bear on modern difficulties.

In the light of this opinion that poetry is an imitation of an action or passion of men, the text: . . . . *nam poetae est inducere ad aliquod virtuosum per aliquam praecedentem (decentem) repraesentationem* (I *Post. Anal.*, l. 1.), becomes clear. Poetry is not ordained to the conviction of a speculative truth as logic, rhetoric, or even the sophistics, are. Its end

is delight in the imitation, and through delight, some moral rectification through the exercise of an act of moral virtue. Father Duffy's endeavor to interpret this text in the terms of a love of beauty misses the profound meaning St. Thomas intended it to have.

In this regard, Fr. Duffy remarks that leading to virtue "is not the end of the major portion of modern poetry or poetry since the time of the Renaissance." If he means: not the conscious end of the poets, he is probably correct. For the traditional doctrine in poetry as well as in philosophy and theology was little known in the post-Renaissance times. False philosophy and heresy have ever engendered false poetic ends.

To the problem of poetic delight, Aristotle's solution places two sources: first, the delight men take in seeing imitations, and second, the delight men take in learning. The first is the source of the greater part of poetic delectation. A poem or novel which re-creates our own experience is a source of keen delight to us. Since poems are in some way universal, the experience, passion, or action in poetry are common to all men; and thus there is imitative delight in every poem for every man. Under the second delight which Aristotle mentions is included poetic knowledge, at once singular and universal, of a thing and an idea. There is, hence, a special delight in poetic knowledge because of the increased intelligibility in this knowledge which makes it a more connatural mode to a human intellect. But because he built his analysis around beauty, Fr. Duffy has failed to include each of these causes of delight.

Fr. Duffy holds that poetic delight is the delight caused by the contemplation of a beautiful object. Thus beauty is the source. But the knowledge of a beautiful thing is delightful because it is a sudden and complete grasp of the sensibility and intelligibility of a thing, an exhaustive knowledge of a singular. Thus poetic delight, if is taken as delight in beauty, is at base a delight in knowing, a special form of integral knowledge analogous to an intuition. In this opinion, it is true, Fr. Duffy's position impinges on that of Aristotle, for the delight arising out of the knowledge of a beautiful object is contained under the second source of poetic knowledge mentioned by Aristotle: "one's pleasure . . . will be due to the execution or colouring or some other cause" (*Poetics* 1448b 19). But such a delight is common to the contemplation of many other entities besides the fine arts and poetry, and hence it is not properly poetic delight.

The poet has many ends. He has one as an artist: to express perfectly the exemplar. But this is a logical end because artist as such does not exist. A man is either a useful artist, in which case the object he makes is to be used for some further purpose, a chair, or a book, for example; or he is a fine artist, and the artefact is made to be contemplated—an imitation. Thus the first *real* end (as opposed to the logical end) of a

poet is to make an imitation. He makes an imitation, however, to arouse delight. In addition, one effect of the contemplation is a good or bad action or passion in the artist, and in the one contemplating his work.

The *finis effectus* of poetry, then, is the imitation. The *finis causa* is delight, though it might be, in some poetry, the moral action or passion. Thus the end of poetry, and of fine art in general, is delight, the delight which follows the creation or contemplation of an imitation. This is Aristotle's teaching; and St. Thomas' agreement with it is shown in the texts: . . . . *artes quae sunt ordinatae ad hominum delectationem* (I *Meta.*, l. 1) and . . . . (*ars quae est*) *ad voluptatem, quaė in quadam vitae quiete consistit* (I *Meta.*, l. 3). It is on these two texts that Fr. Duffy confesses a certain difficulty understanding what such arts were, adding that St. Thomas has given little help on the question of the fine arts.

In his discussion of the end of the artist, Fr. Duffy mentions three ends, the first of which he names primary: the perfect production of the artefact, or the perfect expression of the exemplar. The others he names secondary: the delight caused in the artist by creation, and in the contemplator. He states that the first is necessarily the primary end of every artist; and he adds that it is safe to say (he is speaking from his experience) that the secondary end of the average artist is to cause pleasure, in himself first in creating, and then in the one contemplating, though there may be some other secondary end in single cases.

But the first end: to represent perfectly the exemplar, is understandable only in the light of the what the exemplar is. The artist is not intent on reproducing the exemplar as such, but in producing the imitation, or the tool or chair. Thus an understanding of Aristotle's teaching would have completed Fr. Duffy's opinion, and given it an aspect of reality. His observation, furthermore, that the average artist operates with pleasure as an end is Aristotelian, and bears out the high consonance of the *Poetics* with contemporary poetry. But the pleasure the poet aims at causing is the pleasure caused by the creation and experience of an imitation, and not of beauty or a beautiful artefact.

In a word, then, Fr. Duffy developed his dissertation by interpreting the problem of poetry in terms of beauty; and because of this structure he failed to penetrate the nature of poetry. As a result, also, he has misconceived the form of poetry, its ends, and the cause of poetic delight. Choosing " beautiful artefact " as the genus of his definition of poetry, Fr. Duffy failed to attain the real genus: delightful imitation. And having failed to teach the doctrine of imitation he necessarily departed from the traditional teaching on the questions of the delight, and the effect and purpose, of poetic knowledge. He had special difficulty, moreover, in interpreting several texts of St. Thomas in the light of his own analysis,

texts which, when analysed against a background of the traditional teaching on the nature of poetry, have a profound meaning.

There is a danger, however, that the length and labor of this criticism will give a distorted idea of the value of the book as a whole. It is only in the question of the form, and hence also of the end, that Fr. Duffy, in my opinion, falls away from what is the traditional, and Thomistic, opinion on the nature of poetry. In his treatment of the psychological elements of poetic creation and experience, in his section on the matter of poetry, verbal images, in his criticism of contemporary errors in the philosophy of poetry, and in many other important, though briefer, sections, he is splendid. The book is a good dissertation. It is an important contribution, and a valuable one, to the study in which he is practically a pioneer, the philosophy of poetry. Fr. Duffy has succeeded in doing for the craft of poets and the cause of truth the task he himself recently attributed to the poet:

> "My words in vision
> Run forth before his feet a little way."

MARK HEATH, O.P.

Dominican House of Studies,
Washington, D.C.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Bernanos, G. *Joy*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1946. Pp. 297. $2.75.

Bruckmann, W. D. *Keystones and Theories of Philosophy*. New York: Benziger Brothers, 1946. Pp. 238 with Diagrammatic Chart.

Buckley, G. M. *The Nature and Unity of Metaphysics*. (The Catholic University of America Philosophical Studies, Vol. XCV.) Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1946. Pp. xv-261, with index. $3.00.

Carroll, T. A. *The Venerable Bede: His Spiritual Teachings*. (The Catholic University of America Studies in Mediaeval History New Series Vol. LX) Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1946. Pp. 279, with index.

Cripps, S. *Towards Christian Democracy*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1946. Pp. 101. $2.00.

Foley, L. A. *A Critique of the Philosophy of Being of Alfred North Whitehead in the Light of Thomistic Philosophy*. (The Catholic University of America Philosophical Studies, Vol. XCIV.) Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1946. Pp. 181. $2.00.

Gerber, W. *The Domain of Reality*. New York: King's Crown Press, 1946. Pp. 92, with index. $1.50.

Grajewski, M. J. *The Formal Distinction of Duns Scotus*. (The Catholic University of America Philosophical Series, Vol. XC.) Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1944. Pp. 227, with index. $2.25.

Gustafson, G. J. *The Theory of Natural Appetency in the Philosophy of St. Thomas*. (The Catholic University of America Philosophical Series, Vol. LXXXIV.) Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1944. Pp. 137, with index.

Herbst, W. *Bertha Baumann*. St. Nazianz, Wisconsin: Salvatorian Press, 1946. Pp. 67.

Hering, H. M. *De Justitia Legali*. Friburg, Switzerland. Typis Consociationis S. Pauli, 1944. Pp. 68, with index.

Hering, H. M. *Le Mythe de L'Etat*. Friburg, Switzerland: Imprimerie St. Paul, 1945. Pp. 35.

McCorry, V. P. *Most Worthy of All Praise*. New York: Declan X. McMullen, 1946. Pp. 192. $2.00.

Moore, T. H. *The Darkness is Passed*. New York: Declan X. McMullen, 1946. Pp. 183. $2.00.

Nagle, U. *Uncle George and Uncle Malachy*. Milwaukee: Bruce, 1946. Pp. 183. $2.50.

Phelan, G. B. *Some Illustrations of St. Thomas' Development of the Wisdom of St. Augustine*. (The Mu Nu Sigma Lecture 1946, Mundelein College, Chicago.) Chicago: The Argus Press, 1946. Pp. 57, with notes.

Renard, H. *The Philosophy of Being*. Milwaukee: Bruce, 1946. (Second edition, revised and enlarged). Pp. 272, with index.

INDICES OF VOLUME IX (1946)

INDEX OF AUTHORS

INDEX OF ARTICLES

INDEX OF BOOK REVIEWS

End of Volume IX